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THE ENGLISH PEOPLE

A STUDY OF THEIR POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY

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THE ENGLISH PEOPLE

A Study of their Political Psychology

BY

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AUTHOR OF "THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION," AND "STUDIES IN CONSTITUTIONAL LAW—FRANCE, ENGLAND, AND THE UNITED STATES"

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WITH AN

INTRODUCTION

BY

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AUTHOR OF "FRANCE"

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Introduction

I.

When the publisher of this volume invited me to write a preface to it I felt that there was some measure of presumption in accepting the invitation, there being no need to introduce to the English public the author of the original work, as the following anecdote will testify. Some years ago M. Émile Boutmy received at Oxford the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law, and the way in which the University was moved to confer that distinction upon him was in this wise. Another Frenchman, who had written upon English institutions, thought that the crimson and scarlet of the Oxford doctorate would appropriately adorn his labours. He therefore appealed to M. Boutmy to lay his claims before the academical authorities. But Oxford, better acquainted with the work of the self-effacing advocate than of the less modest claimant, replied to the former in the words of the Puritan maiden of Longfellow's metrical prose, "Why don't you speak for yourself, John?" Hence it was that in the Sheldonian Theatre the acts and words of M. Émile

Boutmy were lauded in that artless Latin with which Encœnia keeps alive the memory of Thomas Kerchever Arnold.

The story was told to me on the shores of the Lake of Annecy. Thither I had gone the year after the death of Taine, to stay with his stricken family in their Savoyard homestead, a peaceful and picturesque dwelling of monastic origin, and to study in his deserted library, among his annotated books, the methods by which he had compiled that monument of industrious research and inductive science, "Les Origines de la France Contemporaine." His most intimate friend, of the long last period of his life in which he wrote that work, was M. Boutmy, who, in the hope of passing many summers in his neighbourhood, had built a cottage at Menthon. Before the house was finished the pleasing prospect from its windows included the burial-place of Taine, on a wooded knoll between the green waters of the lake and the Alpine slopes which rise above the venerable birthplace of St. Bernard. It was in this beautiful corner of Savoy that in 1892 I had already, through Taine, made the acquaintance of the author of this volume. I had taken a villa on the lake in order to spend the summer months near the historian and philosopher, whose counsel and conversation would be of service to me in the work which I had recently commenced. His health was already failing, though no one feared that the end was only a few months' distant; and on the too rare occasions that he gave me the benefit of his advice he was usually accompanied by M. Boutmy. The last long conversation I

ever had with Taine was on one of those golden September days of transparent atmosphere which are frequent in Savoy, when he had walked with his friend to see me at Veyrier, along the beautiful lakeside road, familiar to readers of the "Confessions" of Jean-Jacques. Then, as always, I was struck by the air of confidence with which the older man treated the younger, who had been his pupil before I was born, in the first days of the Second Empire. At that distant time Taine, who was himself only on the confines of manhood, and who was soon to have his public teaching restrained by the restored autocracy, inspired at once in his disciple an admiration, soon to ripen into an intimate friendship, which was never interrupted till his death forty years later.

There were three principal points of sympathy between these two conscientious students of the human race. In the first place, M. Boutmy's independent temperament enabled him to be at once the critic and the complément of his master's genius. From the earliest hours of their friendship Taine took constant pleasure in conversing with his pupil, not only advising him on his work, but confiding in him and discussing with him his own intellectual doubts and difficulties. M. Boutmy was at that period more profoundly penetrated with the ideas and the methods of Taine than later in their careers, but no philosophical divergencies ever interfered with their mutual relations.

In the second place, M. Boutmy's habits of thought and attitude as a Protestant of the liberal school were welcome to Taine. The historian of the "Origins of

Contemporary France" was not a *croyant*, to use the French term, which has not the canting sound of the English word "believer." But as years went on, when, under the Third Republic, it became evident that French "freethought" was fated to belie its name and to be identified with illiberal sectarianism of the narrowest intolerance, Taine—in spite of his friendship with Renan—lost all sympathy with the anti-clerical party, which he recognised as being imbued with the spirit of the Jacobins, whose conquest of the great Revolution had inspired the most striking chapters of his last work. Consequently, he felt the necessity of giving to his children a religious training. But while his passionless study of the educational manuals authorised by the French episcopate moved him to deem it impossible to submit their minds to the discipline of Catholic instruction, his objection to purely secular education had become deeply rooted. It was with the aid of his friend M. Boutmy, who was the son-in-law of the eloquent Pastor Bersier, that he had his children instructed in the elements of faith and religion as taught by the French Reformed Church—an act of paternal inconsistency which, executed with less frankness, has its counterpart in very many English families.

The third bond of sympathy between the two philosophers was associated with the foundation by M. Boutmy of the École Libre des Sciences Politiques, of which he is still the director. During the war of 1870 he had come to the conclusion that the misfortunes which had fallen upon France were in some

degree due to the insufficient knowledge possessed by the French upper and middle classes of what was going on in foreign lands. In seeking a remedy for this he was encouraged by Taine, whose works on English literature and on Italian art had displayed his mastery of the psychological aspects of foreign peoples, and who during the war had further pursued his studies abroad by completing his "Notes" on England. The consequence was that M. Boutmy founded the now famous school of the rue Saint Guillaume, which, though a private venture, unsupported by and independent of the State—as its name of "École Libre" indicates—has become the recognised training college for the diplomatic service and the higher branches of the civil administration. In a land where the "University" once had the monopoly of secondary and superior education, and where the tendency of recent legislation is to revive that monopoly, this private institution, with its advanced course of training in modern languages, in comparative legislation, and in the political and constitutional history of foreign nations, is regarded without jealousy by the official Faculties of letters and of jurisprudence. They rather consider the École Libre as a necessary complement to their less specialised classes. Nearly five hundred candidates for public employment take advantage annually of the education imparted by a staff of forty professors, which includes some of the most eminent historians, jurists, and economists of France and of Europe, who give their services on such generous terms that their teaching is placed within the reach of students of

modest resources by a system of almost nominal fees.

If I have mentioned the chief bonds of sympathy which united the lives of these profound thinkers, it is because they indicate certain special qualifications possessed by M. Boutmy for analysing the elements of the British nation. There are not many books which have more effectively penetrated the psychology of a people than has Taine's "Histoire de la littérature anglaise." His method of tracing the natural history of the mind and soul of a nation, adown the ages, may be open to objection—indeed, its defects have been pointed out by M. Boutmy himself. But it is manifest that intimate and constant intercourse with the creator of that work which, when it appeared in 1863, seemed to mark a new era in philosophical criticism, was an incomparable training for one who was moved to study the undercurrents as well as the superficial phenomena of the English people.

The second point to which I referred, the Protestantism of the author of the following work, is likewise an advantageous quality in a French critic of England. Before long I hope to expound the peculiar position of the Protestant community in France, which is unlike that held by any religious sect in the United Kingdom. Here it must suffice to say that it places Protestants in an attitude of detachment from certain national prejudices, which has laid them open to the unjust reproach of being deficient in patriotism. Far from that reproach being founded this detached attitude has enabled them to perform signal services to France, even

in the direction of defending their hereditary adversaries —witness the courageous opposition to intolerant anti-clericalism displayed by certain Protestant politicians at a crisis when Catholic voices have been dumb or incoherent in defence of their Church. In a short monograph in memory of Edmond Scherer—the brilliant rival of Sainte Beuve, who became a critic when he ceased to be a Protestant pastor and a Christian—M. Boutmy has given an example of this power of detachment. In contrasting the somewhat parallel cases of Renan and of Scherer he draws a fine comparison between the spiritual declensions of a Catholic and of a Protestant, when faith is waning and "intellectual liberation" is at hand. But there is nothing in the picture to denote the religious origin of the artist except its air of detached impartiality. Now this quality is of the highest utility in one who gives himself to the study of a neighbouring nation. There is, however, a further advantage possessed by a French Protestant when the object of his inquest is England. For a Frenchman who is a devout Catholic or a sceptical freethinker—unless he have the genius of a Voltaire or of a Taine—it is almost impossible to make a just appreciation of the influence which religion has had on our national character. By such, English Christianity is regarded as little more than a veil for dissimulating a moral standard which, neither higher nor lower than that of other nations, is steeped in self-righteousness. That form of British pharisaism, which of late years has been ascribed to "the Nonconformist conscience"—though it is not the monopoly either of English Dissenters or

of English Protestants—is a phenomenon difficult to explain to the best-disposed foreigner who has visited our cities or read our law reports. But a French Protestant, whether of the liberal or of the orthodox school, knows from the hereditary education he has received that, while religious profession in England may have less relation with moral conduct than formerly, the religious instincts and practises of the nation are not the outcome of calculating insincerity, but form part of its historical character. He is further aware that that character cannot be understood without reference to the position held by various and rival forms of Christianity, in the hearts of the people, during the centuries of national development since the Renaissance. Hence a French writer of the origin and training of M. Boutmy, from the outset of his studies, is able to reach the deepest springs of our national existence, and at the same time to avoid certain misunderstandings which sometimes lead his countrymen, ultramontane and infidel, to distort their view of English life

The third point which I mentioned, M. Boutmy's connection with the École Libre, enabled him to devote a large portion of his busy life to the special study of English institutions. No foreigner since Delolme has acquired a profounder knowledge of the British Constitution. But M. Boutmy's works display more penetration and are of wider scope than the forgotten treatises of the Swiss publicist, though they are less pretentious. Some of his little volumes relating to England and to English-speaking nations, though

manifestly only revised issues of his lectures to young French students, can be read with profit even by those who deem themselves experts in the subjects treated. One of them, his "Études de Droit Constitutionnel," laid me under a debt of gratitude to the author which I am glad to have the opportunity of confessing. In 1895 I had been studying France without interruption for nearly five years. So rich was the material I had amassed that to organise it seemed an almost hopeless task. The difficulty was how to make a start of writing the long-projected work. It was soon after the lamented death of P. G. Hamerton, and some volumes from his well-chosen library had come into my hands. When the parcel of books reached me the first which I chanced to open was this manual of Constitutional Law. Turning over its pages I fell upon a passage wherein an idea was formulated which had been flitting through my mind for many a month. My starting-point was at last clearly indicated, and three years later the work was completed, though the chapter which was thus initiated stood eventually in the centre and not at the beginning of my book.

II.

The personal experience which I have ventured to relate furnishes a just testimony to the suggestiveness of M. Boutmy's work. But though its lucid exposition and its clearly-cut formulæ may inspire an English writer with new ideas, or reveal to him in a fresh guise old ones already vaguely conceived, it will never lead him to adopt the method which the author

has followed with striking effect in this volume. For in some respects it is a handbook to explain why French and English can never completely understand one another's ways of thought, can never mount or descend to the same standpoint for their view of humanity.

This opposition of the two races is constantly present in the mind of the author while composing his work. It provides the prevailing theme which runs through his pages ; it forms the basis of not a few of his arguments ; it accounts for many a pregnant conclusion which will impress the English reader the more profoundly because it never occurred to him in his unaided study of his own people and of their institutions. M. Boutmy at the outset of his treatise does not hesitate to commit himself to a formula which, in his opinion, indicates the impassable gulf dividing the mental habits of the two peoples. He finds it ready to hand in the sayings of a great English orator and of a French statesman, born a generation later. Edmund Burke, he says, did not disguise his hatred for abstractions ; while Royer-Collard, who also had witnessed the French Revolution, and who under the Restoration, if he did not invent the term "doctrinaire" was the chief of the group which bore that name, boasted of his contempt for facts. These two opinions sum up, in the author's view, the opposing qualities of the two peoples.

This theme is repeated again and again in different forms throughout the volume. In one place attention is called to the lack of aptitude which the English have

for metaphysical speculation; in another passage is described the laborious difficulty which the pursuit of abstractions causes to British mentality. In the latter connection M. Boutmy remarks upon the inability of the English mind to generalise. This is probably true; but it may perhaps be retorted that the disadvantage of the French tendency to generalise is seen in certain sweeping arguments which he draws from the general proposition that Englishmen are incapable of abstract speculation. In this he seems to follow the earlier method of Taine, whose plan, in the first period of his work, was to seek out a general idea around which he could group harmoniously the results of his researches. In a letter to Cornelius de Witt, written in 1853, on the eve of the publication of his "Essai sur Tite-Live," which first brought him into fame, he says: "The difficulty which I experience in an investigation is to discover a characteristic and dominant feature from which everything can be geometrically deduced—in a word, what I need is to have the formula of my subject. It seems to me that that of Livy is the following: an orator who becomes an historian. All his faults, all his qualities, the influence which he contracted from his education, from his family, from his career, from the genius of his nation and of his epoch, all may be traced to that." In the same way many of M. Boutmy's illuminating conclusions are deduced from the formula that an Englishman is an animal incapable of abstract speculation.

The foregoing letter is taken from a volume of the

correspondence of Taine which has been recently published, and which his widow sent to me since I wrote the first pages of this preface. In a later letter, of the same collection, addressed to William Guizot, the kinsman of his other correspondent, Taine throws a light on another phase of French methods of study and research. As M. Boutmy, in the production of his excellent series of philosophical works has followed, if I am not mistaken, the method here indicated by his friend and master, it will be interesting to quote a passage. Taine was in England in the summer of 1860, preparing his "Notes sur l'Angleterre," and he writes: "I am now at Manchester, studying the working classes, and I may tell you that I have conceived the highest esteem for literature and the information which one can gather from it. It seems to me that the judgments to which it guided me when I was in Paris were by no means erroneous. The sight of things has in no wise controverted my forecasts formed in a library; but while this has confirmed and developed them, I am persuaded that my general formulæ remain entirely accurate. From this I conclude that the opinions which we are able to form on ancient Greece and Rome, on Italy, Spain, and England of the Renaissance, are correct."

With all due respect to the opinion of Taine, it seems to me obvious that ancient Greece and Rome, Europe of the Renaissance, and contemporary life in the civilised world stand in three distinct categories as regards the fidelity with which an historian can treat them. My impression is that it is beyond

the power of the most profound and painstaking humanist, steeped in the classical literature of antiquity, to reconstitute the lives of the Greeks and the Romans as they were really lived. It has been said that the most polished exercises in Greek and Latin prose and verse, executed by the best modern scholars, would, to an Athenian of the age of Pericles, or to a Roman of the age of Augustus, have a sound similar to that which an essay in Baboo English produces on our own ears. In the same way it is probable that Beckker's "Gallus," or Bulwer's "Last Days of Pompeii" (to mention two very dissimilar efforts to make antiquity live again) call forth genial mirth in the Elysian Fields, if the Immortals are permitted to take an interest in modern literature. So vague are the notions of antiquity possessed even by classical experts, that the other day I saw in a couple of recent Latin text-books published by an eminent English firm, one of them Dr. Rutherford's excellent edition of Cæsar's "Gallic War," the other Livy's "Second Punic War," edited by a Rugby master, the self-same illustration serving to mislead schoolboys as to what Roman uniforms were like. It was as though the same picture were used to represent the Battle of the Boyne and the Charge at Balaclava.

The Renaissance is not in the same case. We have the paintings of that glorious age which show us how its men and women looked and dressed. We have examples of its domestic architecture, not ruined fragments buried beneath earth or volcanic larva for nearly a score of centuries, but dwelling-

places in which life has gone on uninterrupted, from the time when the stones were piled to the present hour. The languages which Englishmen and Frenchmen talk to-day took definite form in that period: the printing-press stereotyped them and put on record the daily round of our not-distant ancestors, which we can follow in its minutest details. All the same, if the most industrious student of the Renaissance, French or English, could be transported back through the centuries to Sir Thomas More's parlour at Chelsea, or to the boudoir of Diane de Poictiers on the Loire, it is more than likely that he would find himself among surroundings entirely unfamiliar and unexpected.

The study of a contemporary people by a student belonging to another nation of equal civilisation, with the aid of books and other printed documents, stands on quite a different footing. The progress of civilisation is a great international leveller. While, as we have seen, the mental habits of two neighbouring peoples may be entirely different, while their social ways in all classes may present marked dissimilarities, there are in our time a number of features and institutions, of modern growth, which have become common to all civilised nations. Such are the public press, the railway, the postal service, the telegraph and all the applications of steam and electricity to means of communication. Such, again, are the various forms of representative government which, since the French Revolution; have come into existence in all lands reckoned as civilised with the exception of Russia.

If, therefore, a person of trained intellect be thoroughly acquainted with the language and history of a country not his own, he can before visiting it by an assiduous study of all branches of its contemporary literature, and by a constant perusal of its journals, arrive at a knowledge of the inner economy of its people which was not within the reach of stay-at-home travellers in the eighteenth century. Such an one on arriving in the land which he has studied in his library, provided he is able to converse in the language of its people, may experience to a greater degree the sensations which Taine described in his letter from England in 1860, as in the intervening period the points of resemblance in the material existence of civilised nations have become more numerous.

There is, however, one set of phenomena which may have a bewildering effect on the stranger best equipped for studying a foreign country. When he first sets foot in it the outward aspect of his new surroundings may so work upon his mind as to modify the result of many years' reading in a distant library. Even now, when Paris is practically nearer to London than was Brighton within living memory, and in spite of the increasingly cosmopolitan character of the boulevards, the English traveller, most familiar with the easy journey between the two capitals of Western Europe, cannot fail to be struck with the spectacle greeting his eye on the Parisian streets, which denotes that here the conditions of life are, in some respects, totally different to those he left behind a few hours before on the banks of the Thames.

Visual impressions such as these can have had no effect on the appreciations of M. Boutmy, either to complete or to disturb them. For the author of these graphic pages, though he has four or five times visited England, has never seen the superficial aspect of our national life of which he has detected the innermost workings. He is not afflicted with the total eclipse which turned Milton's view from the political movement of the world to the contemplation of the heavenly vision. He can walk abroad unattended. He can discern the verdure of the trees by day and the stars as they shine by night. He can faintly distinguish the features of a person who is talking to him at very close quarters. But the general aspect of the world is hidden from him, while reading and writing are both entirely beyond his powers. It is doubtful if there has ever been another case of one thus afflicted who, conquering his infirmity, has been able to study minutely and accurately the elements of a nation to which he is a stranger. I do not know of another example of one so situated even attempting the arduous feat. Henry Fawcett, a generation ago, won the admiration of his countrymen by the courage with which, overcoming his blindness, he became a master of economic science, an active politician, and the capable administrator of a department of the State. But in his case the subjects in which he attained high eminence, under his affliction, had been familiar to him before he lost his eyesight; and when incidentally he dealt with what was occurring in distant lands, it was only in the same way in which all politicians or publicists habitually

treat of the affairs of countries which they have never seen. M. Boutmy seems to present an unique example of one deprived of the use of his eyes who has essayed and brought to a successful issue the analysis of the elements of a contemporary nation not his own. The readers of this volume, who do not turn to the preface until they have mastered the text of the work, will not suspect that it was produced by one stricken with complete literary blindness. On every page, if the translator has conveyed thither the spirit of the original, the reader will detect signs that it is from the pen of one whose habits of thought are not those of an English philosopher, for which cause the book abounds in conclusions as unexpected as they are interesting and suggestive. But there is nothing in it to show that it was the work of one who was not in full possession of all the senses which Taine enjoyed when he composed his famous "Notes" on England, according to the method which I have already indicated.

While profoundly admiring the results which eminent Frenchmen, such as these, have obtained by their method of studying foreign countries, I confess myself entirely incapable of following it. The plan which we found Taine pursuing at Manchester nearly half a century ago is precisely that of M. Boutmy, as he described it to me in a recent letter—making allowance for the visual infirmity of the latter. For each of his journeys to England he prepared himself with conscientious care. The questions which he proposed to put to representative Englishmen, the problems of our national life which he wished to solve, were all arranged,

according to categories, in note-books, at the head of blank pages to be filled in as his information was acquired. That his literary studies of political and social England before his arrival on our shores had been profound, that his native guides were well chosen, that the examination to which he submitted them was penetrating, cannot be doubted by any English reader of his perspicuous pages. But such an excellent and enlightening result could have never been obtained by an Englishman studying the institutions of a foreign country by the means which our French critic adopted.

My own method is almost entirely the reverse of that pursued by Taine and his distinguished disciple. When I first settled in France in 1890, with a determination to know its people and its institutions, I set to work to strip myself of all my preconceived ideas of that country, whether acquired as a casual traveller in earlier years or from my previous reading of French literature in many branches. I resolved to lead the life of the French people, to mix with all classes of its society, to scale the standpoint from which with varying view they regarded the human movement within their frontiers. Especially I sought to familiarise myself with the settings of the different scenes of daily national life, so that I might retain in my mind's eye the aspect of the legislative chambers, the village municipal council, the presbytery of the parish priest, the salons of the republican prefecture or of the reactionary château, the polling-place at a contested election. My purpose was that when I read a newspaper, a parliamentary report, a

chapter of modern history, a philosophical essay, or even a novel, I might mentally reconstitute the scene, seeing and hearing French men and women, amid their usual surroundings, acting and speaking as they were wont to do in the course of their daily existence.

I will give a concrete example to illustrate my practice. The writings of the Abbé Loisy and their condemnation by the Holy See have attracted almost as much attention in England as in France. It is obviously not necessary to live in the native land of that bold ecclesiastic in order to comprehend the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards the critical exegesis of the canon of Holy Scripture. But some days which I spent last autumn in a cathedral town of Languedoc made me understand more clearly the bearings of the controversy on the relations of the Church and people in France than six months' study in a library of all the documents relating to it. In the course of a tour through several southern departments, which I made for the purpose of seeing if provincial sentiment had been roused by the religious crisis in the country and by the ecclesiastical policy of the Government, I came to the city of Albi. There in the mediæval fortress, which is the archiepiscopal palace, I found the learned and liberal pastor of the diocese, Mgr. Mignot.

In the Archbishop's library the ancient walls were lined not only with the French and Latin books which form the usual literary armoury of the Gallican Church, but with every theological work of note produced in Great Britain by Anglican and Presby-

terian divines since the Oxford Movement. There I listened to the wise words with which the prudent yet courageous prelate summed up the controversy aroused by the advanced theories of the Abbé Loisy and his school. The hours which passed in such discourse were marked by the booming of the great bell of the rose-tinted cathedral reared superb on the banks of the Tarn. Across the river stretched the undulating lands towards the quiet village, where two generations ago Eugénie de Guérin wrote the journal and the letters which have perpetuated the tradition of Catholic piety as it was practised in the land of the Revolution, before the railway and the cheap press had produced effects more disturbing than those of 1789. In the other direction lay the modernised provincial capital. In the main boulevard stood the prefecture, where the agent of the centralised Government issued his orders for the closing of a chapel or the expulsion of a sisterhood, and where the next week a Minister was to expound the anti-clerical policy of his Government, supported by the Socialist deputies of the region. The other side of the street was lined by a row of cafés thronged with chattering sons of the South, who, to judge from their clamorous conversation, were as indifferent to the politics of the Republic as they were to the perils which beset the Church from without and within. Swinging down the middle of the road, a regiment of the line tramped in from the manœuvres, weary and dusty but buoyant; and the crowds which rushed to salute the colours, when they heard the strains of the

march named after the revolutionary army of the Sambre and Meuse, denoted the only institution in the country capable of rousing the population of France from the indifference into which it has fallen with regard to all public matters under the Third Republic.

To have heard the controversy which is exercising the Catholic Church in France expounded by the most competent voice of the Gallican episcopate amid these surroundings, which tell of the past history of the nation, which indicate its present condition, and which foreshadow to some extent its future, did not equip me with any new arguments for or against the position taken up by the advanced school of French theologians. I acquired no new knowledge on the historical truth of the Book of Genesis or on the doctrinal value of the Fourth Gospel. But I left Albi with a clearer understanding of some of the extraneous causes which have induced the growth of liberalism within the Church in France ; I had new light thrown on the policy of the opponents of that movement ; I saw at work the forces which are equally hostile to all supernatural religion, liberal or orthodox. My talk with the inhabitants of the town and my observation of their doings enlightened me as to the attitude of a French population towards all forms of belief, religious, political, or patriotic. I was in a region teeming with associations of the past ; I had before my eyes monuments and institutions which, in a land of revolution, represented traditions handed down the course of ages during which the French nation had been formed.

I do not relate the foregoing as a mere personal experience, which would have only a limited interest, but rather as displaying the method followed by an Englishman desirous of fathoming the depths of national existence in a country not his own, in contrast to the system which a Frenchman would pursue under analogous circumstances. A little boy to whom I am related, whose travels abroad have been more extensive than those of most children of his age, was asked, during a visit to England, by a patronising elder, what books he used for his lessons in geography. "I use no books," he replied proudly; "I go to the places." The boy by his answer showed himself, in spite of his birth and residence abroad, an Englishman, by inborn instinct opposed to the methods of the French among whom he had passed his childhood. I do not follow him to the extent of using no books. Of late years I have spent days and hours in a library sufficient to justify the name which I bear. But my reading is complementary to my personal observation, rather than a preparation for it. The reason why Macaulay compelled the admiration not only of his countrymen but of foreign critics and historians, such as Taine, whose methods had nothing in common with his, was that he, the greatest repository of book-learning of his age, did not rely upon his stores of erudition alone for exercising his faculty of reviving historic scenes. His most durable pages of history were those which he wrote after studies made on the spots where the incidents he portrayed were enacted. Macaulay, spending weeks in remote Somersetshire villages in order to reconsti-

tute the scene of the battle of Sedgemoor, was a model for all English historians in the manner in which they most signally excel. The rise of a more scientific school of historical writing has put Macaulay out of fashion in his own country ; but not one of our more recent historians has attained a position higher than that which he still maintains in foreign critical opinion as a characteristic product of British genius.

The books which Englishmen write about France and which Frenchmen write about England continue to the present day the traditional methods of their respective nations. During the last fourteen years I have had sent to me, with few exceptions, all the works published in England and in France which come under these two categories. The former have been the more numerous ; the latter have been the more interesting. Out of the many books which English writers have published upon French subjects in that period, the few pages which I have discovered of suggestive value, to one already familiar to the country and its people, were all written by persons who had dwelt for a considerable time in France. The French books written about England were, with one exception, the work of authors whose personal experience of our country was brief, and whose methods were similar to those followed by M. Boutmy. The monographs thus produced were less profound than his treatises on England ; the conclusions found in them, some of an amazing nature, displayed the danger into which the French faculty for generalisation leads a writer. But on the whole the French work was valuable in revealing certain phases

of our national character which, though not patent to ourselves, immediately strike the view of a foreigner whose powers of observation have been prepared by a study of our contemporary literature and of our periodical press. If with this preparation French writers of minor rank can produce meritorious work after a superficial glance at England and its institutions, it becomes less surprising to find that physical infirmity, which would have been an insurmountable obstacle to an Englishman essaying a similar task, has not hindered an author of the intellect and experience of M. Boutmy from accomplishing a searching analysis of the elements composing the British nation.

While Englishmen chiefly excel in describing and analysing what they have seen and studied with their eyes, it must be confessed that, with increased facilities for travel, only a very minute proportion of those who go abroad take the trouble to learn anything at all about the foreign countries which they visit. As we are here dealing only with England and with France, it will suffice to compare the habits of the travellers of the two nations who visit one another's shores. The number of educated Frenchmen who come to England for purposes other than those of commerce is, in spite of the easiness of the journey, extremely small ; but of that small number a considerable proportion observe with intelligence the working of our institutions or the political and social questions at issue. The number of educated Englishmen who go to France for their own pleasure amounts to tens of thousands every year, and not one in five hundred takes the opportunity of his

sojourn in a foreign land to gain any acquaintance with its people and their institutions. It was not always so. The English traveller of the days when travel was difficult and expensive was as assiduous in his observations of the people among whom he moved as was the French explorer of England. In the eighteenth century, as in the twentieth, the citizens of each nation maintained their respective methods of study. Montesquieu and Voltaire regarded England through the eyes of philosophers ; Arthur Young explored France as a practical Englishman, noting every phenomenon which met his view, though disdainful of the abstract doctrines which were then broadcast in that country. The journals of the Suffolk agriculturist, though the best of their kind, were only, in an extended form, what every English traveller brought back from his foreign tour, and the practice continued for another half century. Mr. Gladstone, in the last words which he ever published, described the superior advantages of travel abroad in the days of his youth, when every stage of the journey was an education in the manners and customs of the land through which the post-chaise was passing.

No doubt the rapidity of transit, which permits a tourist to travel five hundred miles away from England on the day of his departure from his native land, tends to destroy many of the distinctive impressions formerly associated with a journey abroad. An Englishman who travels with a trainload of English and American people to the extremity of France, there to find a cosmopolitan hotel, inhabited by

English-speaking idlers or health-seekers, and flanked on one side by a British club and on the other by an Anglican chapel, may perhaps have some excuse for not realising that he is visiting a foreign land. At the same time the determination with which English people abroad refuse to know anything of the language, the traditions, the institutions, and the contemporary history of the most accessible countries of the Continent which they visit, is worthy of a better purpose. For some years I have lived not far from a resort much frequented by them during several months of the year. The official registers of the commune show that no less than four thousand British subjects are annually lodged within its gates. As my purpose for residing in France is not that of studying the habits of my compatriots, it is from a respectful distance that I observe the ways of these itinerant British legions, which with open purse annex certain corners of the Continent, and show by their masterful gait how the Anglo-Saxon race has gained the primacy of the world, and how it has not inspired the love of mankind in its path of conquest. One little investigation I have permitted myself to make with regard to the lack of effort of these good people to acquaint themselves with what is going on in the land of their temporary possession. It so happens that in this particular region circulate two of the best-informed provincial journals in France. From inquiries which I have made, from newsvendors and others, I gather that not forty of the four thousand British tourists and residents take in a French journal,

although by so doing they could get their news from all quarters of the world thirty hours sooner than they obtain it from the English papers which they receive from London, to say nothing of the national and local information which they would incidentally acquire.

Perhaps it would be too much to expect the modern Briton, visiting the Continent in search of health or of sunshine, to remember that in the countries of their sojourn there are populations whose daily life, in all classes, present features of high interest to all students of the human race. Perhaps they have some excuse for believing that the only institutions of importance in these lands are the golf-links, the bridge-table, and the tea-party, imported from England, together with the casino as representing the national genius of the soil; for in France, at all events, the unoccupied upper class —which is the most conspicuous French element at the winter and summer resorts of fashion in that country —forgetful of its ancient civilisation, proclaims its decadence by its efforts to adopt English diversions as the gravest pursuit of life. Yet English people, who are not casual pleasure-seekers, but are settled in foreign lands for serious purposes sometimes, are as insensible to the local and national interest of what is going on around them as are the holiday-makers and amateurs of climate in a watering-place. An eminent authority on education in England once asked me to give him some aid in a tour he was undertaking, in order to make a report to the Education Office upon a certain category of schools in provincial France. He

informed me that a bishop had given him for this purpose letters of introduction to the chaplains of the Anglican churches in France. I took the liberty of telling him that for a person engaged in an inquest upon French education, letters of introduction to the English chaplains in France would not be more serviceable than to a Frenchman arriving in London, to inquire into our parliamentary system, would be similar letters of recommendation to the French milliners of Bond Street. My remark erred if anything on the side of understatement, as it is possible that a French milliner in London might be acquainted, in some capacity, with a member of Parliament. But I doubt if an Anglican chaplain in France ever occupied his extended leisure in cultivating relations with a French schoolmaster.

Even the men and women of our nation who go to France for the express purpose of seeing something of French life, and of displaying the cordiality of their sentiments for the French people, take with them, on their missionary tour of international comity, their British habits, which they never lay aside in any country or in any clime. A number of English legislators, accompanied by wives and daughters, made a journey through France last autumn, in response to an invitation from certain French senators and deputies who had been entertained in London earlier in the year. In a tournament of mutual hospitality the French were resolved to be the victors. Not content with banqueting their guests in Paris, they conveyed them all around France to every important centre of industry. In the course of the tour the parliamentary

caravan arrived at Bordeaux, where an ancient tradition of amity with England is based on the genial taste of our forefathers for the generous wines of the Gironde. The historic Château Laffitte opened its gates to the visitors. From the sacred recesses of its cellars were brought forth precious vintages not offered to mortal palates twice in a generation. But the British guests, unmindful of the unique privilege, demanded whiskey. Saddened though the Médoc was at the slight offered to its priceless products, the hospitable inhabitants took no umbrage at the inappreciative thirstiness. A leading journal of Bordeaux went so far as to blame the organisers of the feast. The first law of hospitality, it said, is to study the tastes of a guest, and the entertainers ought to have known that no midday meal in England is complete without its proper complement of "whiskey, tea, and porter." Far from the incident marring the success of the pacific expedition, the general comment seemed to be that thus to cling to native habits amid strange surroundings, and under circumstances of peculiar temptation, was the mark of a mighty nation, whose sons and daughters had changed the face of the globe by ever refusing to assimilate with other peoples on whom they imposed their language, their manners, and even their social usages.

Although the majority of English men and women pass through the countries of the world without taking much notice of what is going on within their frontiers, it cannot be denied that we do take a literary interest in foreign lands. While this volume deals with British institutions in their relation with British cha-

racter and British life, every page shows it to be the work of an alien hand. The unexpected appreciations and criticisms which it contains not only call attention to features of our national existence which in many cases will have escaped our own attention, they also indicate the standpoint from which a Frenchman regards social and political phenomena. Hence, the perusal of this book, which is primarily a psychological analysis of the British people, may lead its English readers to an understanding of certain points of French character which will never have struck them during their passage over French territory.

J. E. C. BODLEY.

February 1, 1904.

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PART I

THE NATIONAL TYPE

The English People

CHAPTER I

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1.—*The Will.*

AMONG the influences which mould a nation natural phenomena have most weight and efficacy; such phenomena, for instance, as the shape of the country, the relative positions of mountains and rivers, of land and sea, the mildness or severity of the climate, and the abundance or scarcity of the fruits of the earth. These influences are as old as mankind; going back over the centuries we can find no period when they were non-existent. They have not varied to any extent, and if a change has taken place, it is in man himself, subject as he now is to an infinity of other impressions. In the beginning they were almost the sole forces acting upon a newly created and sensitive being, and thus produced effects which to-day we deem improbable. These influences are what Taine, in his notable theory of 1863, calls the "milieu." But the race which he separates from them ought to be restored to them; it is but the prehistoric product of these natural phenomena, operating at a time when the first ideas and sentiments of humanity were still shifting, and not consolidated into any monument worthy of commemoration. Such monuments—

customs, laws engraved on stone, religious rites, epic poems, &c.—were, even in the beginning, the products of physical environment, and it was in the course of time only that, having acquired consistency and individual entity, they themselves became capable of engendering impressions and modifying the effects of the great natural influences. But the great natural influences continue to exist, and enclose on every side that human society which they initiated. Even now, by the force of their number and unchangeable nature, they perpetuate and re-create, after a momentary effacement, the deeply-scored characters and hereditary marks which they stamped upon the first generations in their beginnings.

England is a northern country; but, among the northern countries, she occupies a place apart. Her most distinctive feature is her climate, which does not vary to any great extent, the United Kingdom enjoying the almost unvarying temperature which characterises maritime countries. In climate England, more than Scotland or Ireland, resembles the Continent, yet twenty-eight of her counties out of the fifty-two are washed by the sea. Scotland and Ireland have a still larger proportion. The northern isothermal lines rise without interruption as they approach the British Isles. As the curve nears New York and Newfoundland it ascends, passing by Ireland, towards Norway, leaving the whole of the United Kingdom untouched. The temperature at fifty-two degrees of latitude is similar to that at thirty-two degrees of latitude in the United States, a difference of nine hundred and fifty-six miles. What is particularly remarkable is the temperature in winter of the whole of Ireland and Scotland and the West of England. The isothermal lines, instead of being parallel to the equator, are parallel to the meridian. A mean temperature of four degrees extends from Bristol to Thurso and the Orkneys. Over an area of five hundred and fifty-nine miles, from south to north, the climate in winter is invariable. The inhabitants of the British

Isles can travel from one end of the country to the other without experiencing any change of temperature; and, on the other hand, the climate of England largely justifies the saying of Charles II., that "it invited men abroad more days in the year and more hours in the day than another country."

The second peculiarity which distinguishes England from most of the northern countries is the indentation of her coast-line and the fertility of her soil. Quite different, for instance, is Northern Prussia, with its long sandy deserts terminated only by the Baltic, and still more dissimilar are the cold wastes of Central Russia. M. A. Leroy-Beaulieu is of opinion that the extreme severity of the climate in the Muscovite plains, and the great variation between the maximum and minimum temperatures, enervate and depress man instead of stimulating him. He has pointed out, moreover, that all spirit of enterprise is discouraged by the arid and barren soil of that vast empire, with its infrequent and scanty patches of cultivation, and the impossibility of conveying overland from any distance such things as are necessary for life and progress. The Russians have, therefore, no temptation to expend their energies in extensive enterprises; the resulting profit is too uncertain. They prefer to devote their time to the ethical labour of inuring themselves to resignation, renunciation and patience. One of the most popular diversions in Russian villages is a kind of boxing match, in which the victor is not he who deals the largest number of blows, but he who uncomplainingly receives them. No less an effort of will is required to reduce the spirit to this state of passive stoicism than to work off its superfluous energy in violent action.

The condition of the Englishman is directly opposed to that of the Russian. Nature speaks to him somewhat after this fashion: "If you relax your efforts destruction will overtake you, but if you take pains your reward will be a thousandfold." This certainly is a most serious dilemma.

The atmosphere is charged with moisture to a degree which, at times, renders respiration difficult, and the enfeebled body can only maintain its normal temperature by a large amount of exercise ; but, for this very reason, England abounds in big, vigorous men, and she can bring forward perhaps more old men than the most highly favoured of the Continental countries. The soil, moistened by fogs and drowned in showers, requires incessant drainage and clearing to prevent its reconquest by the marsh and forest ; but the labour involved in reclaiming and rendering it fertile is crowned with admirable results. An abundant and chiefly animal food is indispensable to the natives, but there is much rich pasture-land for the breeding of flocks ; and the sea, which abounds in fish, finds its way into innumerable inlets completely around the territory of Great Britain. The constant presence of moisture in the atmosphere, the feebleness of the sun, whose rays are softened by the mist, and the gloom which sometimes overcasts the day, make the tasks of clothing, housing, warming and lighting himself peculiarly laborious to the Englishman. He requires an impervious material for his clothes and thick walls for his house. A large portion of his time must be spent in weaving, distilling, and extracting coal or peat from the earth. How different from the man of the South, who needs but one square of linen to cover his nakedness, and another to shelter him from the sun. If the Englishman does not find all that is necessary for his comfort in his own country, the prodigious mineral riches that lie beneath the soil furnish him with ample means of exchange, and, transport by sea being easy and particularly cheap, he is able to obtain what he requires in large quantities. In short, an almost unlimited production, and exceptional facilities for export and import, whereby are supplied the necessaries of a more active and less circumscribed existence than is elsewhere to be found—these are the economic conditions of life in the United Kingdom. This brings us back to the promise and

menace addressed by Nature to the inhabitants: the promise of a rich harvest if they persevere in their efforts, the menace of an inevitable decay if they relax these efforts. It would be difficult to conceive a more imperious ultimatum, and at the same time a more seductive invitation, addressed to the human will.

It is evident that for the English people Nature has been a school of initiation in activity, foresight and self-control, and, as always happens, these virtues have eventually become independent of the reasons for self-preservation and well-being which gave them rise. By a process easy of comprehension they have gradually acquired an individual value and character. To begin with, it was to the advantage of the community that the individual should practise them, and an instinctive mutual conspiracy was formed to render them indispensable, and to rank them high among the moral ideals of the race. In the second place, the struggle for existence, unusually violent in England, tended to eliminate, by a sort of natural selection, those who were not endowed with the essential virtues—viz., the infirm, the feeble, the timid and the idle. The strong, the prudent, and the industrious alone remained to perpetuate the race and to transmit their qualities to posterity. This is the reason why the desire for action, vigorous, untiring, effective action has acquired the tenacity of an hereditary instinct, the compass of a national characteristic, the position and authority of the most imperative of moral obligations. It is often said that the English nation is, above all things, utilitarian. This is true in the letter, though not in the spirit, if it means that the primary motives actuating the race are necessity and self-interest, all other motives being secondary; this is the case with every form of moral obligation, historically it originates in a question of utility. On the other hand it is inexact, if it means that such considerations are still the mainsprings of action, the guiding principles of every Englishman's life. A motive power of a totally different character is now first and foremost; author and generator of

every action, source of every impulsion—viz., the spontaneous desire, the gratuitous passion of effort for the sake of effort. The most cursory glance will suffice to confirm this conclusion.

The prevailing tendency in the whole political life of the English nation, from which every suggestion or original action emanates, is the desire to exert strength, to give vent to energy, heedless of result. An unforewarned observer, travelling from one end of the country to the other, will at every step encounter illustrations of this desire for physical activity; it is like a curious disquiet in the muscles of the people. Bicycles are to be met on every road in England; cycling is so general that, as one Englishman said, it would be less trouble to name those who do not practise it than those who do. At Oxford, the cricket matches and boat races, which are a far greater stimulant to the student than the ambition to obtain honours, are watched by large crowds. The traveller may have the good fortune to witness a ladies' archery meeting on the banks of the Isis, and for a whole morning watch a hundred of them shooting, with perfect gravity, at targets placed in front of them, crossing the field at intervals to pick up their arrows, and retracing their steps to take aim again without any sign of fatigue or *ennui*. In Northumberland, the working man devotes himself to quoits whenever he has a moment to spare, and becomes very expert at the game. In Lancashire, boxing has the preference of the majority. The story goes that an American boxer crossed the sea to measure his strength with an Englishman, and a certain Sayers, accepting the challenge, came off victorious. The victor, as a national hero, was summoned to Liverpool, and there received by an immense crowd, who went to meet him playing on musical instruments. A similar occurrence took place in Florence in the fourteenth century. The people came out of the town in a body, and journeyed to a little village, which thereafter took the name of Borgho-

Allegri; but their pilgrimage was in honour of a masterpiece of contemporary Art, a Virgin by Cimabue. In short, our chronicler would return from his tour in England with the impression that sport in that country is more than a diversion; it is the satisfaction of a physical need as imperative as hunger or thirst. The Englishman throws himself with the same zest and eagerness into work. Who does not remember having encountered in the streets of London the individual, hastening along with rapid and even step, who, as Hamilton would say, has every appearance of being in search of the accoucheur? He goes straight on his way, absorbed in his object, and heedless of any distraction. He is the real business man, whom we call *l'homme d'affaires*; and notice the volume of meaning conveyed by the word "business" as compared with our word "*affaires*"—the idea and conception of an urgent task which occupies the entire attention of the worker. The word "busy" signifies actively employed, or much occupied. Let us follow the man we have encountered and penetrate into his office. He begins his work immediately, giving it his whole attention; he does not raise his head, as a Frenchman would, to watch a fly, or to follow out a thought which distracts him for the moment from what he has in hand. There is not the slightest interruption in his assiduity, nor relaxing of his application to the task he has determined to accomplish. One of the generally accepted arguments in favour of the high wages received by the English working man is, that he is an admirable working machine; he brings to his work not only a far greater amount of energy, but also a far greater capability than, for instance, an Irishman or a German. It is because the moments of his activity are much closer together, *i.e.*, there are no vacant intervals, no half seconds occupied by a sort of stoppage while the thoughts wander. This is the true basis of the Englishman's character, so far as my observation has gone when visiting London on more than one occasion.

This peculiar temperament is to be found in every class, and even among those who seem most unlikely to fulfil any expectation of vigorous activity. Our young girls in France would consider it inconsistent with their rank, and with the reserve becoming to their sex, if they sought for masculine or arduous occupation outside their own homes. In England they are daunted neither by the difficulty of establishing and organising a charity mission, nor by the amount of time and perseverance inevitable in a work of social relief entailing incessant inquiry, nor by the repugnant duties which fall to the lot of a nurse in a hospital. It is their means of escape from the *ennui* of an aimless life. There are nearly fifty thousand women in England who have responded to the appeal of the Liberal party and have become members of various associations. They have set themselves up in opposition to the dames of the Primrose League, who led the way with this kind of society. They never seem to dread the ridicule which, in France, would too certainly attend such demonstrations. In the same way, the excessive piety, which, in France, disarms the penitent and casts him naked at the feet of his God, rapt in the silence of contemplation and prayer, arms the English missionaries for their difficult struggle. With us this piety is accompanied with intense fervour, visions of another world, and, in this one, a sort of quietism which alters the moral principles of existence. With our neighbours it is accompanied with joy, rapture, an incessant activity of body and soul which enables them to face solitude with cheerfulness, and a breadth of doctrine which allows them to take part in political schemes of a purely mundane nature. It is remarkable that England can scarcely furnish a single example of a community devoted to prayer, seclusion, and communion alone with God, and always brings in, as it were, a third party, a leaven of the world, an element of everyday life, which she sets to work to transform.

In short, activity is more concentrated and continuous

in England than elsewhere, because there is a reluctance to interrupt it, as we do, with moments of relaxation; it is more general, because it includes even that class of persons which, in France, always abstain from it. The inclination for, and habit of effort must be considered as an essential attribute, an inherent and spontaneous quality of the race; present with the Englishmen wherever he goes, a secret reason for his resolutions, the key to many of his actions, fulfilling in every circumstance the duties of an omni-present, unrelaxing motive power, as often to be found as the English themselves over the whole surface of the globe.

The causes which produced the need of activity in this particular section of the human race have lost much of their virtue. The accumulation of intellectual and material wealth has augmented the number of the very rich, and gradually weakened, in a section of the nation, the hereditary instinct which makes man recognise and accept the laws of labour. Further, under these new conditions the idle and the weak have more chance of existence, of perpetuating themselves, and constituting a permanent ethnical element; for, to begin with, the State and the local authorities offered them daily increasing advantages under the form of gratuitous public services; and afterwards, those more favoured by fortune bestowed on them some of their superfluity. The observer should note this evolution and its probable effects, but he must not underrate the greater import of those early instincts which became formed under the operation of first causes.

2.—*Sensation and Perception.*

The conditions or external perception are neither less characteristic nor of less consequence.

The climate in England has a considerable influence on the sensibilities of the inhabitants, and their capacity for experiencing sensations. In countries where a dry atmo-

sphere, charged with electricity, expands the skin and contracts the tissues, impressions are received far more rapidly. The response they provoke is almost instantaneous. The solemn gravity of the Arab chief conceals a hidden fire, which flashes out in rapid decisive movement and violent, passionate action. The vivacity of the southern Frenchman betrays an acute sensibility, conscious of the lightest touch, springing up or recoiling at a word. The sensibilities of the English are less acute and less prompt to respond. In these big, white-skinned bodies, bathed in an atmosphere of perpetual moisture, sensations are experienced far more slowly, the "circulus" of reflection takes longer to complete. Their impressions and perceptions are certainly less numerous and acute. Like their sensibilities, their physical imagination —I mean the faculty of consciously visualising sensations—is lethargic and dull. This is one of the reasons why surgical operations are more successful on an Englishman than on an Italian, for instance—the former excites and agitates himself far less than the latter. The imperturbability of the English Grenadiers under fire, in Spain, at Waterloo, at Inkerman, has extorted the admiration even of their enemies : unimpeachable witnesses. They are not compelled, like the Frenchman, to try and forget in the excitement, the hurry and the "quick march," the vivid images their brain conjures up of the bullet whistling past their ears, the fractured limb, and the spasmodic agony. Any one who has spent a week in London cannot have failed to notice the usual method of advertising, which consists in the senseless and incessant repetition of the same word, the name of a candidate perhaps, posted up by hundreds over huge spaces. Our livelier minds are wearied and stunned by it, but these thousand repetitions are absolutely necessary in order to penetrate the thick covering which, with the English envelopes the organ of perception. Our literary taste is offended by the exaggerated and distorted types, over-coloured pictures, and venomous coarse irony, which are to be

found in the works of even their most cultured authors. If such characteristics were not sufficiently accentuated to jar on our sensibilities, theirs would be left untouched. Their "humour" is sometimes a fantasy, exquisite, soaring, unfettered; yet it is obvious that the brilliant effect is obtained by the mind's momentary divorce from reason, reality, and limit; with the simple desire of appearing to the best advantage, it chooses a seeming vacuity for the display of its evolutions. At other times their humour is but a gloomy and tedious buffoonery, ambling ponderously and perseveringly along under its load, between the real gravity of its basis and the mock gravity of its form. Our wit is of an entirely different calibre; it resembles neither the bird in flight nor the beast of burden dragging along its load; rather must it be compared to a plant, rising up from the earth, with a graceful calyx airily poised upon a stem, whose flower exhales the most delicate quintessence of good sense and good taste. In short, with the English it is necessary to strike hard, or repeatedly, in order to reach their perceptions; like a bell, the sound of which, deeper and more muffled than that of other bells, is the result of ampler and more prolonged vibrations.

3.—*The Creative Imagination.*

Let us imagine a cluster of primitive men cast upon a shore in a dry and temperate clime; perhaps Italy, or Greece. The limpidity of the atmosphere, through which surrounding objects are seen, the beauty of the light in which they are bathed, the exquisite gradation of shades, the delicacy of outline, the brilliancy and variety of colour—all these are a feast for the eye. Vivid sensations in endless variety occupy and enthrall the soul, which becomes absorbed in the magic of the outer world.

From these varying impressions, so sharply defined yet so

graduated, arises a conglomeration of clear ideas which group themselves of their own accord in the brain. The mind takes pleasure in reviewing these ideas, in arranging them. The mouth loves to express them in beautiful language, many-syllabled, joyous, deep-sounding, lingeringly uttered in the still atmosphere which conveys them slowly to the ear. In such countries as these, thought, expressed or unexpressed, is naturally analytical; it is both a true presentment and an enchanted vision; one after the other it unfolds, as in a play, images and ideas, which are to some extent a part of Nature herself. Receiving so many varied and delicate impressions, man reluctantly leaves them for action, and eagerly takes the first opportunity to return to the living pictures which Nature and his own fancy can conjure up before him at will. A kind of passive and refined dilettantism is the source from whence he derives his greatest pleasures.

Under British skies intellectual development proceeds in another fashion. In that atmosphere, misty or clouded with rain, outlines grow indistinct, shades merge one in the other, and delicate colours become a uniform grey. The clamour of red and green alone resists the deadening influence; and these are the colours for England. A sensation habitually sad, monotonous and uninteresting, quickly loses its hold upon the human soul, which turns to things more seductive. The spiritual world attracts and absorbs it, and if a reaction afterwards takes place through some sudden enlightenment, or the unexpected appeal of a more definite and attractive impression, it is accompanied by an increased capacity for appreciation, evidenced by the vigour and depth of the sentiment, and often, perhaps always, by images and ideas rendered vivid by long abstraction; these the soul brings out of its own depths, giving full and free expression to them. Never has man's sensibility received less from the outer world, nor appreciated more intensely in its own way the little which it chanced to obtain. In no other country have

external impressions been more intensified by the imagination forced back upon itself, and steeped in the very inmost soul of man. In Wordsworth's verses on a sunrise the description is all of spiritual impressions, there is barely reference to visible form or colour. Shelley saw in Nature only his dreams. The painter's brush is guided by the poet soul, the poet speaks and sings with the feeling of the psychologist or the moralist. The whole of the imaginative literature of England bears evidence of this inner life, which continually reacts and encroaches on the material world with a singular power of transformation and interpretation. Thus there is in it no light and smiling dilettantism ; its joys are tragic and profound, its sufferings deep-rooted and violent. The imagination is not content to reproduce, with a mere difference of arrangement, the impressions resulting from perception, but rather does a powerful and original invention develop in the twilight of the inner life a whole efflorescence of shapes, which shoot up in the light, dragging with them the scanty real impressions which gave them birth. There could be no greater contrast to the easy receptivity of the man of the South, who, like a strip of photographic paper, unrolling itself before the physical world, slowly and faithfully presents a perfect reproduction of it.

This rich poetry of soul, which has produced many incomparable works, is confined to a few highly gifted or extremely cultured minds. To the masses, mental pictures are almost unknown and always disquieting ; vague and confused as the perceptions which furnish their substance. The imagination, without earthly guide or model, without rich skeins of colour, cannot weave its brilliant veil, and sometimes even forgets the art of spinning. Words, abortive and cold, cannot describe nature by mere analysis. The Englishman rapidly launches his dull monosyllables on the cold air, and entrenches himself again in his silence. The power of expression, like that of sensation and thought, becomes facile

and brilliant in an atmosphere of comfort and ease: it develops in the sunshine of riches and leisure. A kind of second human nature, the product of art and of will, can nurture in its freshly turned soil the delicate seeds, which would germinate but rarely in the solid, compact ground of the original stock. To the gross-minded even now they do not yield all their flowers. "Hesitating, humming and drawling are the three Graces of the English conversation," as a wit once said. No other people can furnish in the same degree the contrast and paradox of genius—and an incomparable poetic sensibility in the chosen few—with an extraordinary dulness and cerebral aridity in the masses.

Does this mean that no ideal exists for the unfortunate masses? They have an ideal, a sovereign good; one which we have already pointed out. It matters little that, for the bulk of the English people, the world of visible perception and the world of pure thought, are two meagre worlds, unattractive, unpromising. As a matter of fact this poverty of mind merely compels them to have recourse to the personal joy of action, the poetry of the will. The *tonos* becomes the ideal of the stoical utilitarian. In default of that subtle enlightenment which makes plain the exquisite harmony of the universe, the English people for centuries past have been stimulated by the dim warmth developed by voluntary action. It seems as if the tension of the muscles quickens the life in their apathetic nerves, as if the tension of the whole moral being, in the moment of action, affords the most vivid and acute joy to these people, driven back upon themselves as they are by unsympathetic Nature, and cut off from their due expansion. And what they glory in, is not only the action of the will upon outward things, moulding, transforming, and leaving its imprint upon them; but the action of the will, by an effort certainly not less, nor less meritorious, upon the spirit which it brings into subjection, placing its seal thereon. This brings to mind the notable saying borrowed by Taine from *Tom Brown's*

School Days, "the consciousness of silent endurance, so dear to every Englishman—of standing out against something, and not giving in." This is the true key to the English character. Tennyson expressed the same thought in the magnificent lines of his poem "Ulysses." He tells how the indefatigable circumnavigator, weary of Ithaca and Penelope, and yielding to the nostalgia of travel, drags his followers on to fresh enterprises, reckless of his diminished forces :—

> "How dull it is to pause, to make an end;
> To rust, unburnish'd, not to shine in use!
> As tho' to breathe were life . . .
> . . . That which we are, we are,
> One equal temper of heroic hearts,
> Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
> To strike, to seek to find and not to yield."

4.—*The Power of Abstraction.*

In order to arrive at the root of the relative inability of the English people to formulate general ideas, and of their dislike for theories and systems, we must follow the operations of the guiding principle through the innermost workings of the mind, as well as in external developments. The conditions which hinder or facilitate the powers of generalisation are obvious. All generalisation must have a perfectly definite element of abstraction, which is more easily recognisable, and stands out in greater relief, the more free a man is to yield himself up, wholly and continuously, to the impressions which partake of it. But this element of abstraction is lacking in England, where people are incessantly absorbed in, or called elsewhere by, the necessity for action. Every generalisation implies a more or less arbitrary extension. Every abstraction infers a more or less inexact simplification. Therefore generalisation, or the power of abstraction, for they are one and the same thing, can only have free play when the mind is not incessantly impelled towards concrete realities by this

necessity for action. Concrete realities compel the intellect to bring to a perpetual and discouraging test, the erroneously simple, and practically false elements in any assertion which aspires to be at all comprehensive.

The people who excel in the production of general ideas, or the construction of theories, are those whose sensations are so numerous and distinct that they can visualise to themselves without effort any number of perceptions, acute, definite, and varied. An admirable example of this is to be found among the ancient Greeks. Their minds were stored with a limitless series of imaginary impressions, each of which, reacting upon the others, produced an endless number of abstract ideas in the ever-present intelligence. Like a swarm of bees, or a flight of birds, they soared aloft and built a kind of independent city, a town of birds, so to speak, where the mind took pleasure in the review of general propositions, which arranged, opposed, and grouped themselves according to their own laws of equilibrium, following a sort of abstract eurythmy ; building themselves up in stages, ranging themselves in façades, and spacing themselves out in noble architecture. The requirements of the world of action place a gulf between it and this purely speculative construction. It is only when the order of the parts has been determined, and received the inviolable seal of harmony, that man returns to the realities of life, and undertakes to adjust their infinite diversity to all these wise, uniform, and unchangeable elevations.

With the Englishman, the rarity and original indefiniteness of the mind's imaginings, and their heavy and uncertain gravitation, hinder the formation of repeated and varied conjunctions, from which abstractions would be evolved in abundance. Springing up here and there in obscure isolation, they do not form an organised group, capable of movement, sufficiently well ordered and concerted to raise itself as a whole into higher regions, where it can be devoted to the building up of great abstract structures. Besides, the imperious necessity for action

and the concentration required to secure its intensity, continuity, and efficacy take entire possession of him, and cut off, as it were, the horizon around him. Generalisation, captive and parasite of action, finds no space in which to expand, nor sufficient strength to develop beyond the limits of a narrow circumference. It stops short directly the mind feels a foreboding that in developing further it would weaken the spring which causes the expansion of human activity. All the natural tendencies of the power of generalisation are therefore curbed and forced back upon themselves. It aspires to be universal and eternal, but action only occupies a point in space, a moment in time. It proceeds from abstraction, simplification ; but action is complex, mixed, heterogenous. Generalisation rises only to fall back again, and, springing forward, hurls itself against a barrier. It is not surprising that intelligences which for centuries have worked under this discipline should have become almost incapable of generalising, and, for the very good reason, that absolute principles, theories and systems, if it does produce them, engender in it a sort of unconscious distrust, a deep and instinctive uneasiness.

The penetrating and cold mind of a Royer-Collard took pleasure in the formula, "I disdain a fact." The fiery genius of a Burke did not hide its distaste for abstractions. "I hate," said he, "the very sound of them." These two opinions admirably sum up the conflicting views of the two nations. But do not mistake me : I do not mean that in England there is an organic infirmity of the generalising faculty, but rather that the faculty of abstraction passively depends upon, and subordinates itself to, a limited aim, which prevents it from working except for clearly defined ends, and renders it at other times passive.[1] The practical mind is one in which

[1] It is not only abstract ideas which are distasteful to the English, but anything which represents a whole. As soon as they encounter one they divide it and cut it up into fragments. "They feel instinctively," said a great observer, "that if they are conscious of all the various points of

ideas, instead of freely classifying themselves with all their possible affinities—a delicate, laborious, and slow process—connect themselves simply with one aim, with a certain type of life, like an accepted "postulum." The power of generalisation is not necessarily weak, but it is limited and self-contained, it awaits a signal to exercise itself; when the signal does come, however, it exercises itself with singular propriety, assurance, and efficacy. It resembles, not the general who commands the whole army, conceives the plan of attack, and engages in battle, but the officer who, at a distance from the field, holds a reserve corps in readiness to help in time of need. This officer may not be qualified to join in the exploits of the vanguard, but he is unrivalled in his ability to obtain a strong position at the outposts and hold it against the attacking force. In such case, though there may be metaphysics, they will be limited in interest, destined to establish a rule of life, as is the case with a religion; there may be political ideology, but it will only be a subordinate ideology, which busies itself in drawing up justifications and apologies after a defeat.

view which are connected with their thought, the certainty, immutability and direct continuity of their effort to attain a practical end will be weakened."

CHAPTER II

THE IDEAL IN ITSELF

1.—*The World of the Spirit.*

The cultivation of will power, the feebleness and rarity of sensations, and, among highly-gifted minds, the instinctive presentment of those pictures which rise up in the mind and seek outward expression, and, lastly, the weakness and inferiority of the faculty of abstraction—these are the causes which, by force of numbers or the influence of master minds, largely determine the conception English people form of the world of the Spirit, the true, the beautiful, and the good. We must follow this operation in their inner lives, and shall then the more surely be able to recognise its reproduction in politics.

When sensations are habitually rich and varied, man, interested and absorbed, cannot detach himself without an effort from Nature, which is reflected in his senses. He imagines himself one of the personages in an endless procession, another drop in the flood of manifestations, a mirror in which the *cosmos* sees and admires itself. He "places" the universe, and seeks a position for himself in the general plan of things. A materialistic conception of life is in some degree suggested to him by all his surroundings. In England, where sensations are weak and vague, interrupted and broken, man does not become absorbed in the outer world; on the contrary, he seeks refuge in the inner life; he soon learns to

"place" himself independently of Nature, intrenches himself in his own consciousness, and there remains; if he again ventures forth he deigns to recognise only his immediate environment. Naturalism is entirely foreign to the English mind, and metaphysical speculation absolutely contrary to it. Both infer a sort of prolonged impersonality on the part of the thinker, a forgetfulness, a detachment, an alibi. He must come out of himself in order to attempt to complete, either on earth or in the clouds, any great and permanent structure. The building up of such a structure, if an Englishman attempts it, will of necessity be disturbed or interrupted by his strong conviction that the human being ought to occupy the first plane, by the persistent idea that he ought to be a part of it all, by the question, a hundred times repeated, What have I to gain by all this labour? With the Englishman the wings of the spirit have not finished growing; they do not lend themselves to any great flights; they simply help it to walk; if it rises for an instant it falls back again to earth the instant after, in the consciousness of a personality that does not allow itself to forget. This personality derives considerable force from the powerful interests which, as we have pointed out, attract it to them, dominating it by the prestige of an immense and sure success, occupying it without intermission, keeping it near the earth. The intensity of his material wants, the rich promise of his country's soil, the facilities arising from its geographical position, all the consciousness of wealth and power, create for the Englishman an ideal within reach of his eyes and hands, and urge him to unceasing activity. He has no time to follow vain phantoms; they are too far removed from earth, too alien to life here below, to its conditions and necessities. Naturalism and metaphysics kept at a distance, or used merely as a background for the perpetually moving human microcosm, sink to the level of religion, and religion that plays the part of a trusted guide, specially esteemed for its common sense—*magister vitæ*. Even in matters of faith

the Englishman hardly gets beyond the horizon of the circumstantial psychologist and moralist, of the earth, earthy. He is in no sense a pantheist, a mystic, or a sceptic.

This growth apart of the inner life—the imagination and the will—and the strong resistance it opposes to external impressions, produce a mental and moral equilibrium very different from what is observable among those whose hearts and minds, wide open to outside influences, have been educated through the senses. With these latter the idea prevails that those things which are manifest—I mean everything which comes within the range of the senses, actions and abstract conceptions—have by themselves and in themselves alone a considerable value, a high significance, an individual virtue and an intrinsic force, and that there is a certain correspondence between the order in which they present themselves and the more mysterious order of the Divine Laws. With the English, on the contrary, it seems that such things have no significance except by their relation to spiritual forces, or more exactly speaking, to a certain spiritual equilibrium, a state of absolute consciousness, from whence comes all their virtue, and from whence they derive an artificial life. Are examples required? Ceremonies can have merit without piety, toleration can exist without purity of heart, works without faith, absolution without repentance, rhyme without poetry, laws without the support of morals, diverse beliefs proceeding from one and the same cause: the premature occupation of the human heart by an immense army of perceptions—articulate sounds, images of objects or of actions defiling in perfect order, before the mind has been able to take possession of itself, arrange its means of resistance, and protect itself against so powerful an influence. All the Englishman's strength has its source in his inner moral being; with him everything depends on a general inspiration and impetus which are generated in those obscure precincts. There, where they operate, space does not allow of a lingering over the detail of

actions, over the form, the words, or the absolute rules by which they put in motion their accomplishment; they will easily adapt the means to their end. If faith is granted, works will follow; anything that is lacking it will supply. In politics the sure guardian of the liberties of the subject will not be the careful text of a constitution in which every emergency has been foreseen and provided against, but, behind vague tradition, beneath the insufficient and out-of-date formulas of the old byways, the constant presence of an unsleeping will, ready to be on the defensive at the smallest indication of the infringement of its ancient liberties.

2.—*The True. The Beautiful. The Good.*

With the man of the South external perceptions are reflected in the mind in a series of images, both distinct and numerous. They are distinct, *i.e.*, their limits are sharply defined and thoroughly obvious; they are numerous, *i.e.*, in the unity of time, a long series of images follow one another in the mind, aiding in the exercise of the faculty of abstraction. We have seen that this faculty in the countries where the sun has most power is more active than in others. The mind contemplates with serenity this infinity of perceptions. They superpose one upon another a large number of times, with such effect that finally a common part detaches itself from the mass, and one single word, a substantive or a verb, is chosen to designate it. During the process of superposition these perceptions become separated one from the other, and other words, adjectives, adverbs and adverbial phrases, are used to designate the differentiated part. With the Englishman the mechanism of perception is totally different; the images it presents to the mind are confused and rare. They are confused, *i.e.*, their outlines are blurred by the mist, and it is not possible to say exactly where one ends and the other begins; they are rare, *i.e.*, in the unity of time only a few are produced. The

faculty of abstraction, when it is applied to these intermittent perceptions, encounters difficulties which hinder its operation. Such perceptions do not lend themselves to repeated superpositions. Produced at first singly, they make a profound impression on the human heart, and provoke a powerful response on the part of the imagination, which emphasises the individuality of the impression, and renders it less liable to become confused with others. Finally, supposing that superposition is possible, another difficulty is encountered: the absence of precise limits, of definite outline, makes it impossible to distinguish and name each of the differentiated parts which the inhabitants of the countries of the sun designate by adjectives or adverbs. These parts adhere to the common part, and a separate word—a noun or a verb—must be used to designate each whole.

One example will suffice to demonstrate the different operations of the two minds. Let us take in French the word *regarder*. This word in our language is only a relic; the survivor of many superpositions from which has been evolved, among several variations, a common part now definitely designated by this word. The differentiated parts have either undergone depreciation, as in the words *guigner rèluquer*, *toiser*, which have become familiar or fallen into disuse; or else they have disappeared altogether, in which case they have been replaced by adjectives, adverbs, or adverbial phrases, as in *regarder fixement*, or *par œillades*, or *avec hauteur*, or *en tapinois*, &c. Now take the English verb "to look." I notice in this connection two classes of facts: (1) The simple variations of the action of looking are expressed by the post-positions which almost correspond to the pre-positions included in the Latin verb, only they do not modify the sense to nearly the same extent. The words *respicere*, *despicere*, *suspicere*, *introspicere*, cover in their figurative sense a very wide field, whilst the words, "to look up," "down," "away," "round," &c., are as a rule limited

to the literal sense. (2) These compounds of the verb "to look" do not exclude other synonyms used to express the subtler shades of meaning and further variations of the action of looking :—

To stare	regarder fixement.
To glance	regarder par œillades.
To gaze	regarder avec ébahissement ou admiration.
To glare	dévorer des yeux.
To wink	regarder du coin de l'œil.
To survey	dominer du regard.
To peep	dominer en tapinois.

It is easy to see that these synonyms have retained, and keep inseparably blended with the principal sense, the differentiated parts which the French at first separated from the verb, but afterwards restored to it in order to complete the sense.

Moreover, we cannot fail to recognise, when observing the actual position of an idea, and the words which express it, in the two languages, that the dissection of the idea by analysis and the omission or altered classification of certain words by means of abstraction, are far more advanced in French than in English. Let us take, for example, the synonyms of the word *briller :* to shine. In French we find only nine, of which six have a general sense, which is applicable, so to speak, to them all ; these are : *luire*, *étinceler*, *flamboyer*, *rayonner*, *resplendir*, *scintiller ;* three, on the contrary, are more or less particularised, and some of them, viz., *chatoyer*, *miroiter*, *papilloter*, are fast becoming obsolete. In English there are no less than sixteen synonyms of the word to shine. Most of these words have retained a certain speciality, which gives them a particular meaning and prevents their being used for any object which shines. To glow indicates a light accompanied by warmth, and cannot be applied to water, a diamond, nor a star. Similarly, the word to glare is applicable only to the sun, or to the eyes of a wild beast, shining in the dark. The word to gloom has a very particular sense : *viz.*, to emit a dull

light, &c. We might add to these observations the simple remark that, of the sixteen words used as synonyms of to shine, there are nine : to glint, to glitter, to glisten, to glimmer, to glimpse, to gleam, to glare, to glow, to gloom, which appear to have the same root, and to be fundamentally the same word. But abstraction is powerless to reduce these different expressions in such a way as to leave only two or three, as would have been the case, for instance, in French.

If from the vocabulary we pass to the complete sentence, we find quite as many marked differences. I will only mention one, which relates to the conjunctions. In French the generality of the conjunctions include the word *que* or are followed by it, so that we have no doubt of their use in the phrase ; they introduce a subordinate sentence into it in addition to the principal sentence. The words, *lorsque*, *après que*, *depuis que*, *puisque*, *pourvu que*, *vu que*, *attendu que*, *tant que*, *jusqu'à ce que*, &c., are all examples of this. Nothing of the kind occurs in English ; with the exception of the word " why," which is the auxiliary of " who," the other conjunctions, " when," " while," " since," " after," " till," " though," " if," are independent of the relative " that." If a word is needed to express a limit and another a period of duration the Englishman forthwith makes use of till, *jusqu'à ce que*, and while, *pendant que ;* he is careful not to add anything that would illuminate the conjunctive character of these words. If we also take into consideration the fact that the French language undoubtedly contains a larger number of conjunctions than the English, we must come to the double conclusion that the Englishman is less convinced, not only of the necessity of linking his phrases together, but of clearly demonstrating the link which connects them.

We shall not therefore be surprised at the tardy development of prose in England. The simple, animated and vivid phraseology suited to the story, for example, which we have possessed since the thirteenth century, the English had not

mastered even in the seventeenth century.[1] Precise expressions, very exactly determined sense, and rather colourless words which appeal more to the intelligence than to the passions, are essential. The English language by no means fulfilled these conditions ; it only contained words highly charged with colour, which could with difficulty be constrained into the expression of abstractions, and were so unmanageable that, even when uttered, they gave play not to flights of volatile ideas flitting across the sky, but to a swarm of intense emotions whirling round a concrete image. They were lacking in the qualities of taste, the easy method and occasional flight of the storyteller ; their qualities became defects, dulling the charm of their style, and making it incoherent, like a nightmare. We may observe with Taine that even Bacon, who was accounted the chief English prose writer of his time, was not master of his own language, and continually betrayed himself a poet and visionary ; he was ill at ease with the abstract vocabulary, and, though esteemed a philosopher, was a mere dialectician. In short, at this period thought in England had not completely issued from its natural indivision ; ideas arose from the depth of the mind like a thick tuft of grass, still adhering to the turf from which it had sprung ; very different from our harvested sheaf, which might be untied, spread out, beaten and made up neatly again, after sorting.

These are the elementary tendencies which invariably appear in every work of art. The Englishman is rather possessed by them than possesses them, for they operate in him and guide him like instincts. But, above the tyranny of instinct, rises the liberty of the spirit. From the elements of which a subject is composed, the intelligence chooses one conscientiously and voluntarily, embracing it with fervour, developing it with pleasure : making it an ideal. Beauty is the sensible expression of the causes and conditions from whence happiness

[1] "An English Froissart at this period (fourteenth century) had written in Latin" (Jusserand, *Litérature anglaise*, p. 417).

arises. The idea of beauty is therefore connected with that of sovereign good. Placed under the necessity of supplementing the poverty, monotony, and incoherence of external perception, the Englishman has not lacked great artists, who have created for him, out of their own souls, a whole unreal world. They have conceived of themselves and displayed for his benefit a great series of magnificent pictures. But, as a rule, reality only provides them with a point of departure or a nucleus, not a model, not even a rule nor a bridle. Order, proportion, and fitness cannot be attributes prized and sought after, in the absence of material examples, qualified to demonstrate the value of temperance and good taste. On the one hand intensity of life and movement, on the other the majesty and power of the will, giving a force to impulse or lightly curbing it—this is what the Englishman contemplates with interest in himself, and which it pleases him to find in others. It is the double ideal his poets incessantly pursue. They expressed the first, in the time of "Merry England," with an illimitable richness, an immeasurable profusion, a fantasy creating haphazard and without stint. But, as is natural, neither the accumulated wealth of the imagination, nor its wildest caprices, have completely succeeded in satisfying the profoundest yearnings of man, or in dissipating the sadness which, from the heavy, lowering sky, seems to pour down upon his heart, vaguely oppressing it. The Englishman finds a surer and more personal pleasure in studying and representing the play of moral forces, but even in this he lacks the sense of order and discretion. The Englishman is more of a poet than the Latin, because he is more creative ; he is less of an artist ; he is rarely a virtuoso. Less occupied in trying to reproduce visible Nature under the veils in which she is wrapped, he trusts more to his invention ; less accustomed to appreciate the harmony and exactness of affinities, owing to their lack of ordinary manifestation, or in default of leisure to analyse them, he cares little that they should control his inventions ; this results in a

freedom and arbitrariness in the method of explanation, the order of succession of parts, and the choice of forms; a disdain for perspicuity, eurythmy, and verisimilitude, which, to classic minds, has the effect of being contrary to Art. Something of Art exists, however, since there is the desire for, and the pursuit of unity; the poet pursues it, and finds it in depths where it escapes us, but he has no scruple in breaking and confusing, time after time, the external unity which holds us in thrall. Everything in his case comes from within. The imagination—an imagination without master or model—has been compelled to project outwardly an entire world of its own creation, where man alone is what it chooses to behold and demonstrate, where it pursues no other ideal than the tumultuous expression of force and life, where it seeks and experiences the calm of the sea, quivering with subsiding waves, which has been stilled by a sign from the sovereign will.

The history of the various branches of literature and all other departments of human thought—the fine arts, exact sciences, moral sciences, philosophy, religion—afford us conclusive proof of this theory. The sensibility and thought displayed therein have grown up under the strict discipline of action. Certainly, nearly every direction in which the understanding and the imagination can be exercised and expanded have been represented in England by great examples; but the result of a happy chance or the energetic effort of individual genius, can easily be distinguished from the natural and spontaneous production of the national genius. Considered in the whole course of its history, English literature is certainly one of the most admirable, opulent and varied in Europe, but there can be no doubt as to the kind of work in which it excels, and the sort of subjects towards which a secret instinct continually impels it. Its vocation is to depict either the concentrated tension of the power of the will, or the vigorous display of human activity. It only demands a vast

and picturesque arena in the outward and visible world. Shakespeare pictures the human will: he represents it in manifestations of scornful and sudden spontaneity, troubled by visions, struggling with overwhelming influences, or vanquished by a blind fatality. Milton uplifts against God the "unconquerable will" of his Satan. It is the concentrated pathos of moral struggles which a Currer Bell, a George Eliot, and a Mrs. Gaskell endow with a powerful reality founded on life. On the first plane, in all these creations, we meet the will, considered in its passionate or rational inception, its evolution and phases, its incentives and mainspring, its perturbations and errors, its qualifications and effects. A law has recently been discovered in chemistry by which, several bodies being present and several different combinations possible, the combination produced is that which entails the greatest expenditure of heat. An analogous formula might be applied to the English, to the effect that, in every case, the creation of the mind—or the manner of regarding it—which finds in them the strongest affinity—is that most qualified to develop and stimulate human activity and render it effective.

CHAPTER III

THE IDEAL IN ITS APPLICATIONS

1.—*Criticism and History. The Drama and the Novel.*

ANOTHER characteristic, emanating from a different psychological cause, is strikingly apparent in criticism and history. Owing to the feebleness and aridity of their faculty of abstraction, the English deal with these subjects from a singularly narrow and partial point of view. Take, for example, the work of Buckle, and the contrast of its immense erudition and prodigious mass of reading matter with the unique and inferential thesis they serve to establish. As a rule, English historians see, beyond the pictures they paint, the image of contemporary interests, and, too often, look upon it as a part of them. This, in different ways, is the case with Grote, Macaulay, Freeman, and Froude. They have neither the temptation nor the ability to emerge from their country and their times for the pure pleasure of contemplation and knowledge. They do not know how to create an alibi in the manner of the true historian. They are always more or less chained to their soil and captives of the present.

If we want an even more forcible and perfect example of the superior gifts and peculiar weaknesses of the English genius, we must consider the two indubitably most original sections of English literature : the plays of Shakespeare in the sixteenth century, and the novel in the nineteenth century. These two groups of works present a contrast to the literary productions

of the Latin races, in that, wise disposition of material, exact placing of relative parts, methodical sequence and easily grasped unity, are merits less esteemed than vigour and glow, life and breadth. A play of Shakespeare's is a world in itself, and yet at first sight it seems a chaos ; because parts of it are hewn out of a complex reality ; because the unity introduced into it by the opposing individualities of the principal characters is more or less broken by the number of secondary personages, repeated shiftings of the scene, and disconcerting discrepancies of tone and style. No drama exists which depends more on the imagination of the public, nor introduces it with less preparation into the presence of infinitely varied situations. The public was neither disturbed nor offended by the incessant strain put upon them. Like the poet himself, in the intensity of the life, the force of the passions, and the individual reality of the characters, they saw the miracle of art ; like him, they disported themselves in time and space. No one is more realistic than Shakespeare in depicting souls, and yet less careful of the probability of external circumstances ; farther from abstract types, and yet more idealistic and even visionary. Let us consider how the tendency of the poet, in proportion with the development of his genius, is to rid himself of all restrictions. This is evident even in his prosody. In his second manner he adopts the blank verse of Marlowe ; he no longer employs rhyme, except for the production of a certain effect ; he breaks the rhythm and varies it to such an extent that his poetry has the same varieties of tone as harmonious prose ; he carries on his meaning from stanza to stanza, stopping short in a verse when other characters interrupt, and not completing it, save by a compensatory syllable at the end ; playing as he pleases with accepted forms. Meanwhile the analytic phrase and elegant turn of the sentence, borrowed from the Latin, become contracted and broken. The predecessors of the poet used them out of all measure and to satiety ; he renounced them. Outbursts and sudden gusts of

passion, and the imperious concentration of the will, cannot be adapted to them ; they compress language into synthetical expressions. "In conversing with the meanest of the Lacedemonians," said Socrates, "he appears at first awkward in speech, but suddenly flings into the conversation a noteworthy, swift phrase, mustering all his forces, like a warrior hurling his javelin."

The two races born and bred for action, the English and the Spartan, are recognisable in this description.

After the death of Shakespeare we witness a phenomenon unparalleled in history. Dramatic art, which had hitherto shown itself so vigorous, so free in its choice of subjects, so fruitful in the invention of poetic forms, began to wither and dry up, gradually losing its vital force and hold on the public mind, until finally it became incapable of aught save clumsy imitations, and imperfectly conceived adaptations of our popular pieces : proof positive of its utter sterility. But meanwhile another form of literary expression, the novel, began to develop marvellously. It was as if by the side of a branch that was dead another branch had grown, covered with flowers and fruit : the immense quantity of sap ebbing from the literature of the drama, flowed into the novel, and burst out into luxuriant foliation.

Considered merely as a form of the work of art, the novel is indeed the successor of Shakespeare's plays ; it reproduces their general tendencies, and external effects. In the most finished specimens of this class a Frenchman is struck, not only by the large number of personages, but also by the frequency and abruptness with which the narrative is interrupted and broken

[1] Another analogy : the literary tendency of which I have spoken was greatly strengthened by the immense diffusion of the Old Testament and universal Biblical education. But the Bible has always been popular because the Hebraic imagination, with its profusion of allegory, the profundity of its thoughts, the weakness of its dialectic, its brusque ejaculations, belongs to the same order as the English imagination. There is a congenital conformity of some sort between the two geniuses.

off, and the reader transported from one place to another ; he is no sooner placed in communication with one set of figures, than a change of scene causes them to disappear and introduces new characters surrounded by different circumstances. The English novelist is quite at ease among this extraordinary medley of types and incidents ; he is like Shakespeare fronting his public ; he does not feel that he demands too great an effort on the part of the reader whom he whirls along with him.

This only applies to the external, general, and superficial construction of the work of art. If we go deeper into the matter, we shall recognise that the ideal of the English novel is to represent real life in all its bearings and infinite diversity. In this our French novels differ in a striking degree from English ones. In France our best novelists confine themselves to placing in full relief two or three principal characters who are surrounded by others in diminishing degrees of importance, until certain of them have but one word to say, and the harmony would be marred if they uttered two. This seems to us the fundamental principle, the sign of the true work of art. We make these two or three essential figures move, encounter and run foul of one another, until a final crisis, to lead up to which, in the most natural manner in the world, the novelist employs his whole art ; and the *dénouement* of this crisis leaves us with exactly the same impression as we experience after witnessing the fifth act in one of our plays. The amount of character which we develop in each personage varies in proportion with what is necessary to lead up to the crisis, or what will serve to render them more interesting and truly pathetic. The crisis, therefore, limits the development of character. Nearly all our novels are uniformly constructed on this plan, which Taine declared to be classic ; life is thereby simplified to the point of impoverishment, and the supreme desire for clearness and harmony which possesses us makes us indulgent spectators, almost accessories, of this elevated conception of Art, so strong in its unity.

In England no one troubles to place the characters under any kind of hierarchy, making some stand out in strong relief and throwing others into the shade. The Englishman paints all the figures, if not with the same breadth, at least with a care, attention, and insistence which is unnecessary for the secondary characters. Each appears to have an equal claim on the interest of the reader, because each has an equal share in the intense life with which the work is deeply imbued. Further, in English novels there is no unique crisis towards which all the characters insensibly drift, and to which they are subordinated. As a matter of principle the Englishman does not demand dramatic unity in a novel; his chief desire is to be presented with successive glimpses of real life, in all their truth and profundity. When the author has finished unrolling his pictures, the reader does not think of reproaching him for having produced a work which has, as it were, several central groups of characters; he would accuse himself of pedantry if he bargained for his own pleasure. With the English novelist this results in a very free and independent style of narration. He does not submit to the restriction of a particular unity of style or conformity to a set design; it would weary and fetter him in his conception of the subject and impoverish his style. He is not disturbed and preoccupied with a crisis which he cannot bring to a head. He does not feel compelled to determine the due importance of each figure and its claim on the attention of the reader in the part which it is called upon to play in the crisis. There are few concise pictures in English novels: what they convey is an impression of growth and expansion by reason of the intensity of life which pervades them.

2.—*The Fine Arts.*

It is remarkable that neither painting, in which the Dutch have excelled to the same extent as the English, nor music, in which the Germans, their fellows, have incontestably the

mastery, nor architecture, in spite of the admirable models left them by the conquering Normans, nor, finally, sculpture, has had any original efflorescence in England. This is explained by the fact that all these arts have grown up under the jealous discipline of action, which at first thwarted or hindered their development, and afterwards supplied the artist with a public which was a slave to the same necessity for action and incapable of throwing off its fetters for the purpose of admiring freely. But here a more particular and deeper cause intervened, which, as it were, sterilised all the arts of design. Nature in England presents none of the conditions which generate a great art. It does not surround man with an atmospheric environment in which every object is visible, each in its proper place, where hues are infinite, and diminutions of light and shade imperceptible, where the whole chromatic scale is illuminated by a brilliant light, and is visible and beautiful even in the far distance. The Englishman mostly sees nature through fog or mist ; objects disappear under this veil, or rather their outlines seem confused and blurred ; their colouring becomes dull ; the delicate tints have not sufficient vibration and brilliancy to burst through the cloud and appeal to the eyes. The violent colours only—red and green, for instance—can triumph over the thickness of the veils. The Englishman is therefore educated, even by circumstances, to comprehend Art imperfectly, or at least to interpret it quite differently, for instance, from an Italian. He gets little from the sterile nature surrounding him, and either ignores his imperfect model, filling up with the creations of his imagination the blanks and hiatuses that a simple copy would leave in his picture, or else essays a literal imitation which is as remote from nature as the types he evolves in his own imagination ; for it is purely abstract and scientific, and in no degree represents what would be seen by a normal and natural vision. The designer of a plate for a manual of botany, minutely representing the five petals, the three stamens with the anthers, &c., is he not as far from the picturesque reality as

the man who dreams of a chimerical plant, the model for which exists only in his imagination ?

Liberty in fantasy, or servility in imitation, are the two extremes between which art oscillated in the hands of the painters who adorned the end of the last century. Reynolds and Gainsborough were only isolated personalities, without masters or pupils ; Rossetti, Watts, and Burne-Jones were the masters of a powerful and self-confident school whose articles of belief were drawn up by Ruskin. This is the only true English school of which history makes mention, the first in date of time in which the national genius can be recognised and grasped. Ford Madox Brown, who was the originator of the pre-Raphaelite and realistic style, visited Paris in 1844. He loudly proclaimed that everything he saw there inspired him with an invincible repugnance, and it was this absolutely negative sentiment which decided him to create a new art. Ford Madox Brown assuredly knew what he did not want, viz., conventional posing, traditional mixing of colours, all the characteristics of academic Art ; he believed he knew what he did want, viz., a return to nature. But what could these words convey to a race whose eyes had been accustomed for centuries to see every object unsubstantial and unrelieved, blurred and discoloured by the mist ; whose imagination was wearied with a vain search in the barren reality of nature for the wealth essential in a picture; whose taste, habituated to a single sensation, was incapable of receiving several at a time, harmonising and blending them in a happy and plastic unity ; whose art had not discovered the secret of separating parts by innumerable delicate shades, nor of making each take its proper place in the picture ? The words of Ford Madox Brown were, fundamentally, only an abstract and sententious formula ; his art bears strong evidence of this : it wavered incessantly between a painstaking copy or the living model and an entirely imaginative interpretation of its subject ; it sought Nature only to lose her, shaking off all traditional fetters the

better to pursue her; and finding, at the end of the quest, that instead of the Nature it had followed, a mere fiction was within its grasp.

It is another token of the same incapacity that the painters of the pre-Raphaelite school were as a rule either poets, savants, or writers, and did not drop their profession when they took up the brush. They could not be simply and solely artists; in order that Art might flower, it had to be transplanted to a different soil and grow up in a strange land before entering on its own inheritance. English Art was at first entirely a literary art, a poetry which employed form and colour for its own satisfaction, making use at the same time, with more or less freedom, of other mediums proper to poetry.

Are proofs required? English painting is essentially intentionist, *i.e.*, it pursues an end other than that of mere painting. The operation of painting must be coerced into attaining this end and fulfilling this intention. Art in England, therefore, has not the ease and happy freedom which characterise it when it is its own master and has only itself to satisfy; this is a first and obvious defect. Further, every means by which it can arrive at the desired end is considered worthy, *i.e.*, an attempt would not be made to attain this end by the mere general effect of a landscape or the physiognomies of the various figures; but it would also be suggested by the material objects with which the idea of the desired end was habitually connected; in other words, by symbols. Painting in such case is therefore not only intentionist, but symbolic. "All great art is didactic," cried Ruskin, the prophet of the new faith; by which he meant that a good picture should not only represent, but demonstrate something, that it should have not only a subject, but an object, and that that object, instead of being one with the outlines and the colours, should be distinct from them, and dominate them from the standpoint of a philosophical conception.

Further proof of this is to be found in the other character-

istics of the work of art. For instance, there is no balance in contemporary English painting, nothing which approaches the centralisation of effects. The figures may be grouped in one corner, leaving the rest of the canvas empty. If thereby the idea which the painter has in his mind appears with greater distinctness, of what has the spectator to complain? Similarly, the Englishman does not hesitate to place discordant colours in juxtaposition; he displays them and contrasts them with bold touches, without taking into consideration hierarchy and the blending of tints. This strife of colours, which delights the eye unaccustomed to such striking tones, destroys the unity of the picture; but it does not destroy the unity of the idea that the picture is intended to convey. In the same way the canvasses are usually longer or shorter on one side of the line of the horizon than the other; the Englishman does not endeavour to reproduce the natural environment of which the figure is the centre, to make it proportionate with the room in which it stands, or with the landscape in which it seems sometimes lost; he suppresses the actuality of the environment, depicting above the head of his figures little of the cloudy sky or ornamental ceiling which would furnish a sentimental or magnificent accessory to the scene; he multiplies his figures, taken out of their natural setting; he groups them together, huddles them one against the other, and crowds them into a narrow space; all the figures are animated, all the faces speak; each plays his part in one of the three or four distinct actions which divide the attention of the spectator, for the Englishman freely composes his picture of as many separate parts as he pleases; he only requires that they shall be interesting, he feels under no compulsion to make a choice among them.

Is it necessary to mention a final trait? Ruskin, without taking into consideration the effect of the whole, made it a rule that each flower, or butterfly, should be exactly copied in such a way that there could be no doubt as to what it was, nor even as to the particular species to which the object belonged.

"It is," he said magnificently, "the homage due to the Creator." But who cannot see where this rule is harmful to the painter? It might be to his interest to disguise the individuality of the plant or the insect, by modifying or slurring over certain parts, so that they should only produce in the whole the impression he has proportioned out to them.

I will say no more with regard to this school, which was one of the glories of England in the nineteenth century. The great artists who adorned it made themselves remarkable by the profundity of their conceptions, the novelty of their posing, and the singularly original beauty of the human form in the figures which they multiplied. But all these elements of a great art lacked the attraction and magnetism which would bind them together, form them into groups, and make them one with surrounding nature. The grandeur of their conceptions rendered these poets careless of the distinction between truly pictorial ideas, which are naturally rendered by form and colour, and other ideas which can only be represented in a picture by symbols and delicate allusions. Their pictures are lacking in the profound unity of matter and idea. At first they conceived matter and idea apart, and though afterwards they tried to bring them together with the aid of unusual talent, they could never make them seem closely united.[1]

3.—*Philosophy. Science. Religion.*

English philosophers have been distinguished from the very first by a trait peculiar to themselves: they have no inclination nor capacity for metaphysics. In the course of two and a half centuries there have only been three serious English metaphysicians—viz., Hobbes, Locke,[2] and Spencer. No philosopher has contented himself with pure speculation. Most of them—Hobbes, Locke, the two Mills, Spencer—have found it

[1] R. de la Sizeranne, *La peinture anglaise contemporaine.*

[2] Berkeley belonged to Ireland and Hume to Scotland.

interesting to follow out their principles in politics and to utilise their deductions in the service of the government of their country; they tried to excuse their excursions into the abstract by demonstrating that there was a practical use in soaring above the regions of common sense for their postulates. It is possible to soar above and then descend towards the earth, as these great thinkers have made perfectly clear by their anxiety or their haste to return to the objects which have a surer interest for their contemporaries. It is remarkable, moreover, that the one great philosophical enthusiasm which possessed England during the course of the last century had for its object the very man who had most completely shaken off metaphysical absorption, Auguste Comte. In England, far more than in his own country, Auguste Comte found bigoted disciples, and admirers sufficiently enthusiastic to pension him in his distress. Even now the Positivist doctrine, almost forgotten in France, awakes a living faith like a religious enthusiasm in more than one English heart. The care John Stuart Mill took to distinguish himself on certain points from Auguste Comte, permits us to conjecture that at a certain period, like a dutiful pupil, he imbibed most of the master's inspirations. His correspondence, recently published, confirms this supposition. Herbert Spencer and Bain have drawn largely from the same source. A philosophy like Positivism, which, unlike any other, professes to supersede metaphysics, was like a revelation to the English; it responded so perfectly, so completely to their secret and profound desires, to those blind instincts which supply man with the private reasons for his predilections. The posthumous adoption of Comte's ideas in England, and the immense influence they still exercise in this country, are sure proofs of the feeble capacity of the English for metaphysical speculation and of their joy at being delivered from it by the authority of philosophy itself.

In experimental psychology the Englishman is incontestably first. There is no experimental psychology in Italy; the

people are too frivolous, too imaginative. Occupied with the outer world, they have no time to analyse and understand the inner. In France this psychology is three-quarters logic. Accumulated facts, which make of it a different thing, are distasteful to us ; they incline towards the indefinite, and lend themselves to too many exceptions. We want definite divisions, brief, clear formulas. "Germany, who can adapt herself to everything, even to experimental psychology, finds her true sphere in, and inclination towards, metaphysics."[1] Experimental psychology, on the other hand, finds its proper place in England ; it proceeds from the same fundamental tendency as spiritual poetry and the novel. I mean the inclination towards the inner life, the frequent retreat into itself which is one of the most distinguishing traits of the British character.

So much for the development, obviously unequal, of the different branches of philosophy. Let us now consider the ideas themselves, and find out their individual significance. In this connection is it not curious that four of the greatest thinkers in England have all agreed in disputing the transcendent character either of innate ideas or of *à priori* synthetic ideas? The contingent and the relative alone found access to their city of philosophy. Locke in his time combated with singular vivacity the doctrine of innate ideas professed by Leibnitz ; James Mill, pure logician as he was, appears to ignore the importance of the question. He limits himself to one short chapter, entitled "Some Names which require a Particular Explanation, Time, Motion, &c." John Stuart Mill maintained in his system that everything is the result of experience. Our belief in the absolute is an illusion ; it is simply the frequency or incessant repetition of two successive facts which leads us to expect, with a sort of certainty, the second with the first, and gives us the impression of a necessity which links them together. Herbert Spencer explains in the same hap-

[1] Th. Ribot, *Psychologie anglaise.*

hazard way the ideas of time and space. The two latter philosophers, and also Bentham, approach one another in their system of ethics. They can be characterised by the same word; they are all utilitarians. The origin of every moral idea is, according to them, a conception founded on experience. This conception, in the system of the last-named philosopher, is likened to a slow deposit, transmitted by heredity, and enveloped in the prestige of custom and tradition. It is a fact that neither the absolute nor the transcendent have ever really found a place in this purely contingent philosophy.

Is a final characteristic required to show the native tendency of the English mind? It will be sufficient to examine the point of view of the most subtle thinkers in regard to God, a Creator, Providence. Huxley said somewhere that though offensive and coarse atheism shocks the English, agnosticism, a mild atheism which clings to forms, neither offends nor convinces them. A single and very simple objection upsets this doctrine and its arguments. "It is not practical, it has no present application; we are pledged, the necessities of life concern and occupy us; we have not leisure to change the habits of our mind, nor remove the foundations of our moral instincts." The majority of the English are unconscious of this little inward monologue, their faith is protected by a sort of *cant* which cannot be analysed nor abruptly displaced. Moreover, the two thinkers, who in France would have been professed atheists, have been particularly careful to avoid disturbing the traditional beliefs of the public to whom they address their writings in the hope that they will be read to the end. John Stuart Mill interprets his positivism in such a manner that the question of the spiritual world, though eliminated from science, is still a subject of legitimate speculation to those who have a taste that way. Mill reproached Auguste Comte for not leaving the question open. He did not abjure metaphysics, he considered it a matter of personal feeling, and did not cavil at the process

of reasoning which every individual is at liberty to apply to it. He believed he could conciliate the majority of his compatriots by this concession, and it sufficed, indeed, to prevent the prohibition which would certainly have been attached to his books if he had frankly published his true thoughts. Still more characteristic was the manner in which Herbert Spencer treated the idea of God when he encountered it on the summit of his metaphysics. He endeavoured, with characteristic insistence, to show that the God of evolution is infinitely superior to the mechanical God of Paley. Further, did he not endeavour to make his Unknowable a Being, substantial, active, and creative, of which it cannot be said that it does not possess the intellectual and sensible attributes of God, because there is nothing to be said of it, and of which the philosopher himself, however, ventured to say that what is to be found in it is not less than personality, but more than personality? It was a strange necessity which compelled him to set up, not only for himself but for others, an absolute, substantial, and more or less individualised Being, which could be adored, and to which religious people might raise temples and altars.

The attitude of the English towards the mathematical, physical, and biological sciences was, until 1860, characterised by indifference, and even a sort of hostile disdain. The physical and biological sciences were generally considered likely to lead the mind to anti-religious conclusions, and were not approached without trembling. It is remarkable that, until the middle of the century, there were in the universities no courses of lectures on these subjects, so successfully cultivated in Germany and France. When the State or private individuals judged it proper to organise the lacking instruction they did not usually collect more than three or four candidates. If all the men were passed in review who, during the last hundred years, had distinguished themselves in the sciences, we should be surprised to see how many of them had obtained their knowledge outside the schools, and how few

had followed a regular course of study in the sciences in which afterwards they made their mark. Where could they find such a course? Nothing of the kind existed in England. It was just chance which, seconded by natural talent, indicated to them the department of science in which they would excel. They were first attracted by a particular point of view which seemed unusual, and perhaps a little narrow, and, following it up, they expanded it by dint of study and research; they did not approach science in her commonplace and wider aspect, like our pupils when a classical treatise or manual is placed in their hands. Their intelligence did not command the superficial and encyclopædic information which is a means of strength, by reason of the numberless correspondences of which it gives an idea, and a weakness, by reason of the indefiniteness and incompleteness of that idea. In accordance with their requirements, they carefully grouped the other sciences or sections of science round the one they had chosen, and from out a deep experience, undisturbed by the words of a master, they brought forth singular and unexpected links to connect these fragments of knowledge together. Faraday, Huxley, Tyndall, Darwin, and Spencer began in this way, and the conditions under which science appeared to them stamped all their work with a profoundly original character.

I have used the word "disdain." For the bulk of the nation science, considered as science, did not exist; it was valued merely on account of its use to the engineer, the doctor, &c., in the course of their practical work; and for that reason alone was it esteemed by practical minds. It would have been considered a slur and a grave error of judgment to introduce into the title of a practical institution anything which might be considered as disinterested science. When the School of Mines was reorganised in Jermyn Street, great care was taken to admit nothing into the new name bestowed upon the Institution, from which it could be deduced that the teaching would cease to be entirely material. In England,

science is not divided into pure science and applied science, as it is in France, where it forms the basis of two distinct and successive courses of instruction, first in the Polytechnic School and afterwards in the special schools. Pure science and applied science are considered as one and the same thing, and the English professor digging deeply, hollows out a dwelling-place therein for himself, in which he lives shut up, unmindful of his surroundings. Huxley told me one day that a Cambridge professor, noted for his good work in physics, had never seen a prism in his life. Natural philosophers may be found who have no knowledge of chemistry nor of natural history, and naturalists who have no idea of medicine. It is not only in another branch of his special subject that the man of science is wanting. It might even be maintained that among English professors there is none of that elevating intercourse and exchange of general ideas which only the possession of a sort of common language renders possible and easy. Many savants lack what might be called the enlightenment of a general education: these are pure specialists. A man eager for information might apply in vain to the most eminent scholars in England; if he tried to engage in a conversation on pure science he would find no one to speak to; his interlocutors would not answer him.

It is interesting to note how the Englishman constructs a theory from a class of facts in a particular science. With us Frenchmen such a theory is an explanation, *i.e.*, a connecting of the principles and hypotheses on which the class of facts rests to the principles and the hypotheses on which the whole of the science rests. This operation is performed by means of abstractions linked one to the other by a subtle and transcendent logic. Which means that they simply appeal to our reason, and we are only satisfied when we can thereby go from one end of the science to the other, without encountering any contradictions or hiatuses whatsoever.

In England, the theory based on any class of facts has neither

the same appearance, nature, nor aim ; it is not an explanation, but a representation ; and a representation which is not intended to demonstrate the link which unites the class of facts to others, but only to render it intelligible in itself and, therefore, *imaginable* by means of what the English natural philosophers call a *model*. Where the French or German natural philosopher perceives a group of lines of force, the English natural philosopher imagines a packet of elastic threads, attached at the extremities to the various points of conducting surfaces, and endeavouring both to contract and expand. In the work by Sir Oliver Lodge, in which the modern theories of electricity are set forth, it is only a matter, he declares, of ropes which move on pulleys, which cause the drums to revolve, of some tubes through which water is pumped and others which inflate and contract. "It seems to me," said the great natural philosopher, Lord Kelvin, "that the true meaning of the question, 'Do you understand a particular subject in natural philosophy?' is 'Can you make a corresponding mechanical model?' I am never satisfied until I am able to make a mechanical model of the object. If I can make a mechanical model, I understand ; but if I cannot make a mechanical model, I do not understand." It is "imagine," and not "understand," that Lord Kelvin means in this passage, and the kind of rough candour with which he repeats to satiety the word "understand" is proof positive that he has no idea of the more refined and spiritualised sense we have given to it.[1]

There is another and even clearer evidence that the Englishman does not comprehend science generally as we do. The unity of each individual science, and the unity of science considered as a whole, are, in our eyes, essential attributes, without which we are unable to comprehend the scientific order. These attributes are even part of its substance. It is

[1] Max Leclerc, *L'éducation des classes moyennes et dirigeantes en Angleterre.*

towards unity that the theories of our scholars incessantly tend, and unity, which is the last word of their researches, is the first word of metaphysics; the two orders of speculation meet at this point. There is nothing of the kind in England. The representations by means of which scholars demonstrate any section of science whatsoever, are pictures intended only for the imagination, having no other object than its satisfaction; but for the imagination scientific unity does not exist, it comprehends singly each class of facts. When it has explained one of these classes by means of figurations based on certain principles or hypotheses, it passes on to another, without considering itself pledged in any way by the work it has just accomplished, and for the explanation of the new class it brings forward other principles and hypotheses; the necessity for any link existing between the two orders of speculation is looked upon as outside the question, and incoherence reigns supreme. Further, the speculation, which at one time was based on a certain conception of matter, makes way without opposition for a speculation based on an entirely different conception, incompatible with the first. This incompatibility would offend our reason, the constant effort of which is to combine laws and reduce their number; it would seem like a contradiction in science itself. But, on the other hand, it is only a harmless variety in the eyes of the English imagination, the characteristic of which is to comprehend thoroughly each concrete whole and give so vivid a presentment of it as, for the time, to efface all the rest. Hence, in the works of Lord Kelvin and Maxwell, each chapter can and even ought to be read separately, for it often happens that if the first is founded on a conception of matter which admits the immobility of inert particles, the second will infer on the contrary the extreme mobility and perpetual circulation of atoms. The imagination, passing from one to the other, enters each time on an entirely new phase; just like a bird organ, which, when the cylinder has been advanced a peg, warbles a new air, without any echo of the preceding airs.

Another indication informs us that the imagination is not only uncontrolled by, but governs science, and instead of being in subjection to the spirit of unity and synthesis, imposes silence upon it. The subjects which Lord Kelvin, Maxwell, &c., treat with most complacency are those on the borders of science which touch on the insoluble question of origins. The molecular constitution of matter, the distance between imponderable particles, and the nature of light and electricity, have been treated by them with an audacity which fearlessly handles a thousand millions of atoms and, as it were, sports with time and eternity. The reason of this, is that these questions have a side which touches on the infinite, *i.e.*, on a domain of which the imagination is sole sovereign. Moreover, certain scholars, such as Lodge and Tait, are accessible to such hypotheses as spiritualism, magic, &c., which a more rational conception of method would have made them avoid.[1] With a perfect tranquillity of mind they take their point of departure outside science; they unconsciously step over the boundary which separates the certain from the probable, the probable from the imaginary and chimerical.

But it is especially in matters of positive faith that this tendency in the British character is chiefly remarkable. Michelet made a distinction between the people who love nature and the people who love books. This division coincides in a general way with another and more significant. Lovers of beauty who only comprehend the idea of law through the order and harmony of nature are to be found all over the world. Others there are, inclined towards action and efficiency, whose first and chief requirement is an inward strength which gives them complete command over themselves, and enables them to rally all their energies and master reality. Of these are the English. An active rather than a contemplative race, they were predestined to throw off the yoke of Rome and reject the Catholic faith.

[1] Duhem's *L'École anglaise et les théories physiques.*

Catholicism is not merely a religion of the heart and conscience; a strongly organised spiritual power, it also presents the external appearance of an imposing political institution which demands and obtains obedience. By means of its local sanctuaries with their particular cult and special virtues, and its various half-divine types, which recall the heroes and demigods of Greece and Rome, it links itself to historical tradition, and forms a natural sequence to the paganism it has destroyed. On the other hand the mysticism blended with its faith, the sensuality and suave poetry of its creed, its talismans, sacred playthings, magic formulas, and numberless sacraments, by means of which the awful God, brought into everyday life, seems to grow kindly and familiar, respond to a somewhat whimsical æsthetic sense in man, a delicately feminine conception of things. In its semi-pelagian theory of Grace, and reluctance to exalt faith above liberty and works, it approaches the masculine and simple doctrine of rationalism. It is a truly human religion, inasmuch as it accepts man as a whole, reconciles his antinomies, respects his habits, humours his weaknesses, and shows appreciation of his natural intelligence. These contradictory qualities entail a certain infirmity. Catholicism supplies the will rather with a series of particular recipes, adapted to the various necessities of life, than with a broad and elastic code of regulation.

Sometimes it helps man to escape from the intolerably burdensome or vulgar duties which society imposes upon him; guides the strong and urges him on to the attainment of the sublime virtues of renunciation and holiness; and offers the weak a refuge in the narrow life and indolent idealism of the cloister. Sometimes it acts the part of a too indulgent doctor to human infirmity, and by ingenious sophistries reconciles the law of Christ and mundanity. Charity is its triumph. But is not charity as interpreted by Catholicism an encouragement to improvidence and self-surrender? Instead of forcing the heart to examine itself and face actualities, it falsifies the moral

problem by simplifying it, evades, disguises, and misrepresents it by bringing in the priest and the sacrament; and eventually resolves it, as it were, mechanically. An ingenious eclecticism, which appeals to the imagination, the senses and the heart without too great a strain on the reason, Catholicism does not supply the invigorating atmosphere which is necessary to strengthen the character and adapt it to the usages of our present existence.

Protestantism of the most pronounced type and in its most popular forms furnishes strict discipline for the will. Anglicanism is merely a combination of statesmen, a Church rather than a religion, and the Church of a caste. We must seek for the heart of the nation among the Dissenters. It throbs in Puritanism, Presbyterianism, and Wesleyanism. There is no connection between these beliefs and classic religion or philosophy. Protestantism has not received from tradition the historical and universal character which imprints a Roman stamp on the religion of the Vatican. It is rather a species of purified and transfigured Judaism revived after fifteen centuries. Far from appealing to every man, its aridity, austerity, dislike or disdain for forms, and its iconoclastic tendencies, make it a gehenna for the imagination and the sensibility. It prides itself on placing or leaving man in normal and customary conditions, supplying him with a fund of strength which is regulated by nature for expenditure in practical life. The doctrine of justification by works allows man to repose upon the merit of external and intermittent actions, and atoning by them for others less commendable, he makes up the account of his hours. Justification by faith places him in the grip of a rigid ultimatum, a moral "all or nothing." To those who believe, God gives everything, and no one truly believes if he does not entirely surrender himself in return. By faith, things which were the same become different, altering in significance and worth; without faith, nothing is of any importance because everything is valueless. The signification

of actions gives place therefore to a general signification of the will and the conscience. The deep conviction of a new inner life renders the homage man accords to common sense meaningless and insignificant, and abolishes the futile balance he established between his merits and his faults. Justification by faith is a glorification : it is like a new birth which creates a right of primogeniture for its elect, thereby becoming a school of moral strength and liberty. It conceals pride under humility. A Catholic, the more surely to gain heaven, simply flies temptation ; if he does act, the more painful and useless his actions are, the less notice they attract, and the less fruit they bear, the nearer to sanctity he believes himself to be. The chosen ideal of life in Catholicism has always been asceticism. The Calvinist begins by conquering his will by grace, thus placing it in harmony with the will of God. He goes forth into action fearlessly and triumphantly, having entered into an alliance with an infinite power. He approaches the combat like a man who wears divine and impenetrable armour ; he exercises his energy regardless of the temptations thereby incurred and the moral deficit which would constitute him a debtor. He sets out ransomed, free and secure.

In short, Catholicism is the religion of a puissant spiritual power which legislates, prohibits, and punishes ; it has a State policy of its own to which the individual bows. Protestantism is the religion of spiritual "self-government." One is eminently the creator of order and rule ; the other is eminently the preserver and renewer of energy, and the religion most suited to a people born for action.

PART II

THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

CHAPTER I

THE ALIEN RACES

General Observations.

After the natural environment, formed by physical causes, comes the human environment, formed by the collection of people around each man. Take a race as it issues from prehistoric shades: it is already divided into tribes, which possess the rudiments of institutions, a supreme ruler, ranks, heads of families, and religious beliefs and superstitions. These things, which we comprehend in the vague idea of race, are, as a matter of fact, the effect of the successive physical environments traversed by migrations, and the fortuitous circumstances encountered by man during his progress. The fertility of the soil, the form of the continents, the quality of the light, the proximity of warlike tribes or civilised nations, &c., are apparently the causes which have brought the people to the degree of development indicated by the signs we have mentioned. The causes operated with the more effect that man was newly created, and the freshness of his sensibility and the pliancy of his organism rendered him easily receptive. As yet external sensations would not encounter in him a large and compact mass of acquired habits, capable of resisting pressure and refusing to receive impressions. The climate and other material agents have therefore played a chief part in the fashioning of human nature; they have left profound traces on it, such as we should not expect in the present day from these

causes now almost ineffective : their effects are perpetuated in individuals ; they have triumphed by the weight of large numbers or the influence of the elect. It was to this degree of civilisation that the Germans of Cæsar and Tacitus had attained when they formed the first nucleus of the Anglo-Saxon race.

The race now enters and comes forward into history : it has arrived at its last halting-place and is established in the country where its destinies will be worked out. We see this new historical unit, of which heretofore there existed only the germs and tissues branching out in all directions, in the shape of institutions, traditions, and customs. Supreme power is concentrated in the government, religion in the Church ; literature has its monuments, the number of which grows from century to century ; and public education develops in accordance with a pre-arranged system. In a word, all the germs which had hitherto been separated and incoherent have now combined and form a resistant and compact mass, rebellious to the action of material causes. Among the causes which can still transform the human environment I see scarcely anything except invasions, which bring it into direct contact with another people, and into personal relations with a civilisation developed elsewhere under totally different conditions. We shall have to take note of this influence, which was never more apparent than in the conquest of 1066. This conquest was the last in order of date, and after it the human environment became still more modified by such imperceptible changes as when from an agricultural nation it became commercial and colonising, and later, in the eighteenth century, when, though still commercial and colonising, it became industrial. Even more productive of results was the Reformation, which, while operating profoundly on the individual, brought to light the virile qualities of a sleeping race. Among decisive influences may be ranked the two acts of union, after which first Scotland and then Ireland began a sort of invasion

of England, which ended in the blending of the three races, and the progressive enrichment of the English type. These facts and the causes which led up to them are worth studying, both in themselves and their consequences, for they have all had their share in the far-reaching and profound modification of the race —in other words, the human environment. Sometimes, by facilitating certain relations and repeating occasions for intercourse, they have given rise to customs, encouraged tendencies, and brought to light qualities to which they gave scope ; sometimes by sowing in certain men a doctrine capable of propagation by the influence of example and the infection of self-sacrifice, they have renewed, rejuvenated, and transformed the heart of the nation.

I.—*The Germans.*

First of all, let us consider the ancient Germans in their native land as Cæsar and Tacitus represented them. They had something of the savage and the beast ; characteristics which were partly the result of a backward state of civilsiation, and partly of an ingrained nature which reappeared again and again after centuries of culture and refinement. Wine, gaming, and sleep entirely occupied these brutes in time of peace. At banquets they made their great resolutions and decided for peace or war ; to make up their minds they required the excitement of food and the fumes of wine. But instead of discussions there were quarrels. Without a word having passed they would come to blows, and sometimes when they recovered from their intoxication they would kill or injure those who did not agree with them.

Puberty was backward among the Germans, and all the stronger and more vigorous on account of its long maturing. The women were chaste, the family sacred. Good manners supplied the lack of good laws. Each house was isolated ; the attraction of a wood or the proximity of a stream determined

the situation; and large spaces separated each house from its neighbour. Even at banquets each diner had his own table. The nation was possessed by a horror of inactivity, thereby differing from the Gauls, who were reproached by Tacitus for their indolence. The Germans jealously guarded their liberty; this is why they took two or three days to present themselves at political gatherings; they did not wish to appear as if under orders to attend. They allowed their priests to be the leaders of their political meetings, and to reprimand and strike them in battle, so that the chastisement seemed to come direct from God. Resolutions were moved by the chiefs, whose words had weight according to their age, nobility, and eloquence; they adopted the tone of the orator who tries to convince, not that of the master who commands. The soldiers reserved the right of option. Hidden behind their bucklers, they signified their refusal or assent by a prolonged murmur or clash of arms.

The political constitution of the Germans in the time of Tacitus was absolutely rudimentary, but Fustel assures us that the same might be said of all the races which had arrived at the same degree of civilisation. As a constitution the State was unknown; and that representative of the State, the official, was non-existent. The Gauls were very different; both in France and Italy at this period they used to canvass for and obtain numerous public offices which had been instituted by the Romans. Some of the tribes had no king; others surrounded royalty with the respect demanded by birth, which constituted the sole title to this dignity. Further, with the Germans the king had no arbitrary power; his authority was strictly limited; limited also was the authority of the *principes*, who were chosen by the soldiers on account of their courage. They did not command in battle, simply taking the lead by force of example and great deeds accomplished. They were chiefs by right of admiration. Each of these personages was surrounded by a certain number of soldiers chosen by himself. They were not ashamed to follow in his train, and to form his

comitatus. They considered themselves bound to him by an oath of allegiance, and gloried in being killed or wounded in his defence. They pledged their faith not to the individual only, but also to his posterity, and the oath of allegiance they swore extended even to his younger children. Finally, religion ranked high in their life and thought; but it was a religion which owed nothing to plastic forms. God was the sovereign. He ruled behind those who were in command, and the excommunication of the impure gave the finishing touch to the perfectly moral character of this unbeautified religion.

I will not vouch for the significance and import of any of these peculiarities considered separately, but I certainly am struck by the effect they produce as a whole, particularly when I recognise trait after trait, more or less transformed, in contemporary English civilisation. What man, having lived in England for a long time, can deny the materialism of the larger part of the nation? To-day, as heretofore, sport, betting, and drinking must be reckoned among the most appreciated pleasures of the English; to-day, as heretofore, the plenitude of a satisfied stomach is required for the uplifting of their genius; and, if a statesman at the beginning of the last century is to be believed, the most important resolutions and ingenious schemes are formed in the half-hour after dinner which Englishmen devote to hard drinking and smoking-room conversation. Tardy puberty, chastity of the women, and large families are characteristics of modern England, just as they were of ancient Germany. What observer has not noticed the small detached houses which, even in the towns, are portioned out at the rate of one to each family, and the clubs where the *table d'hôte* is unknown? A desire for contention and effort still animates the race. The results of their activity are in evidence over the entire globe. But what may be traced throughout English history right up to our own days is the same striking antinomy as that which existed between the German's profound devotion and strict obedience

to his chief and his chief's family and his instinct of revolt and reluctance to conform to the wiser discipline of which the State was the centre and mainspring. The sentiment of personal fidelity to a man and his posterity which the Germanic follower felt for his chief has passed more or less into the profound loyalty of the English subjects to the race and blood of their princes. And yet what people have more frequently rebelled against their kings and molested, offered violence to, imprisoned, deposed, and put them to death? The irritable pride of the free man has been tragically manifested side by side with many proofs of an extraordinary attachment to the dynasty.

Similarly, the pride of the German, impatient of all assumed, improvised, or uncertain authority, and, on the other hand, his innate respect for all superiority having a solid foundation in a traditional social order, may be reckoned among the causes which in England have arrested the development of the administrative monarchy, and established in its place a powerful political aristocracy. Thence has arisen the local self-government in which, until lately, bureaucracy was unknown and the official hardly appeared, no special countenance being granted to him, whilst for centuries the English subject readily accepted what appears to be a far more questionable hierarchy, and patiently submitted to the quasi-paternal authority of his neighbour, who, though a great landed proprietor, was a private individual like himself. The Englishman is for anti-equality, in the sense that he wants perfectly distinct classes in society, and even several degrees in his own class; he admits the hereditary transmission of titles, but will not allow that birth is the one thing needful; he believes that merit may, some time or other, claim part in them. No one has a greater respect for rank, yet no one is less familiar with the spirit or caste. He is not averse to privileges, but he will not tolerate them as simple immunities; he joins with them compulsory duties and obligations. These characteristics are substantially

the same as those contained in the description which Tacitus has left us of Germany. The same double and contradictory tendency reappears throughout the whole of the political class, which, while closely restricting the royal power, was careful not to destroy nor depreciate it, and which substituted parliamentary government—*i.e.*, government by discussion and persuasion—for the sway of a single man. Again, this tendency reappears in the religious class, which threw off the yoke of sacerdotalism, once so powerful, and took away the authority of the confessional and the prestige of the real presence, bringing religion down to the level of the simple believer, so that the clergy entirely ceased to be intermediaries and the believers tolerated nothing but the sacred text between them and their one Master, God.

2.—*Anglo-Saxons and Celts. Danes, Normans.*

The English nation, of which the Anglo-Saxon race formed the first stock, presents this peculiarity, that it is the least mixed and most homogeneous of nations. The English are the Germans of the North. Among the Germans they had for ancestors the Anglés, the Jutes, and the Saxons, who all belonged to the same Low German stock. The last-comers, the Danes and the Normans, were branches separated from the same trunk which for a long time had been nourished by the same sap ; no events were needed to graft them one on the other. The first-comers found Great Britain occupied by a Celtic population ; but the slowness and brutality of the conquest and the energy of the resistance ended in the extermination or rigorous cantonment of the conquered, and for a long time no fusion was possible between the invaders and the first occupants. The reverse was the case in the Germanic invasions on the Continent. The Franks, for example, melted rapidly into the subjugated population, adopted its idioms and religion, and formed a mixed race. What happened in Great Britain's early days was repeated later on in the English

colonial settlements. The inferior races never mingled with their conquerors, and disappeared, leaving no trace.

Some of the highest authorities have delighted in proving that the Celts have not been exterminated, but continue to exist unnoticed, cultivating the land for their German masters, and that, chiefly through the serving-women, the two races have become inextricably blended. They go even further: they give us to understand that the genius of the Celts has passed with their blood into the veins of the Anglo-Saxon people, citing in support of this theory the insatiable curiosity, the rich invention, and even the art of dialogue and the picturesque setting to be found in the first monuments of their literature. I do not deny that the germs, rather than the full flower, of these qualities is to be found in the Irish narratives attributed to the seventh and eighth centuries, and founded upon yet more ancient originals, which the transcriber felt bound to embellish with the ornaments and artifices proper to his time; neither do I deny the absence of the same gifts in the old Anglo-Saxon poems, the greater number of which originally came from Iceland (*Beowulf*, which is considered the most important by the English, is attributed to the eighth century). It requires a scholar's utmost temerity to ground conclusions on so fragile a basis. But this contrast—taken for what it is worth—may it not be due to the fact that the Anglo-Saxons were for a long time mere barbarians, and that their civilisation was perhaps two or three centuries behind that of Ireland, whose admirable religious system rivalled, it is said, for a while even that of Rome? The richness of invention, the art of dialogue and of picturesque setting were, in the case of the Irish, merely the effects of a culture and development about three centuries in advance of that of the conquerors of Great Britain.

I willingly admit that those Celtic populations which retained their independence were able to exercise some sort of superficial, tardy, and transitory influence on the invaders;

but I have difficulty in believing that the Anglo-Saxons owed nothing of their genius to the Britons who were subjugated on their own soil. The intellectual type of a race is, in the beginning, the product of the natural environment; afterwards it is chiefly the product of the slowly progressive human environment—a compound of mental habits which become fixed, sustained, and inveterate by the continuous circulation of certain modes of thought, reasoning, and feeling. The same habits become enfeebled, infrequent, and finally non-existent if the circulation is hindered or interrupted. Language and literature are the depositories of this spiritual capital, the vehicles of this intercourse. When, in the case of a subjugated race, they have been violently and absolutely abolished, it is like the destruction of a museum the models in which have been incessantly copied, moulding all men in the likeness of the same image; the original social mould perishes. The scattered and oppressed individuals of the vanquished race submit, as in the past, to the action of the natural environment. But the moral environment is entirely transformed; it is now that of the conquering race—full, free, and vigorous. The bulk of the vanquished race melts rapidly away under the powerful influence, until it can no longer be reckoned with as a cause or scientifically appreciable element.

This is precisely what happened to the Celts in England. All the indications are contrary to the hypothesis of a fruitful survival of their intellectual type. When the vanquished have a superior religion they generally win their masters over to it. The Anglo-Saxons, who, since 449, were in contact with a Christian population more civilised than themselves, remained heathens until the middle of the seventh century (579–681). They owed their tardy conversion to a mission which came from the Continent. The vanquished, before mingling with their conquerors, often for a long while sing softly among themselves of the exploits, the glory, and the misfortunes of their race; history retains the echo of these

deep, dull murmurs. In this case not a Celtic verse survived the conquest. Language is the keeper of national traditions, the mirror in which the ethnical type learns to recognise itself. The subjugated Britons immediately and completely unlearnt theirs; they passed nothing, even of their second language, Latin, except a little ecclesiastical jargon, into the idiom of the conquerors. M. Jusserand believes that until the eleventh century no single trait of their genius reappeared in Anglo-Saxon literature, which in inspiration and in style was entirely Germanic. So nothing outward and visible has survived, and everything has to be inferred from the mingling of blood in some unknown but probable fornications. That these obscure and dumb vehicles also transported a portion of the Celtic spirit is possible, but in any case it is only an hypothesis, and an hypothesis without any great interest, it seems to me. Moreover, it is an hypothesis unsusceptible of scientific proof, like those specious etymologies, the intermediary forms of which the linguist has not been able to trace in the evolution of the language. That the intermixing should continue for five centuries without one of the elements betraying itself by any sign to the outside world seems almost impossible, and the conjecture is the more unlikely that the first supposed manifestation of the Celtic genius must have been made after the Norman invasion, *i.e.*, at an epoch when a new, weighty, and influential cause supervened, which would easily account by itself for anything open to question.

Before quitting this point I must make one or two remarks. The first is, that all the successive occupants of British territory, issuing from the same stock, who helped to form the English nation, were, without exception, adventurers, pirates and fortune-seekers, who may have had diverse motives for leaving their native land, but all of whom possessed the requisite energy to do so. A struggle at once took place between the first arrivals and the successive new-comers, incongruous elements as they were, yet all equally remarkable for

physical vigour and exceptional morals. This struggle was characterised by extreme barbarism and inhumanity. In the end a great and favourable elimination was accomplished : the feeble were cut down ; and only the most obstinate, intrepid, and strongest remained to form families. And so a nation was formed which, in spite of ethnical differences and diversity of latitude, presents a striking analogy to ancient Rome, which in the beginning was peopled with bandits and rebels, and, by disciplining their energies very gradually, finally dominated the whole world, thanks to these brute forces deposited in her cradle. Emerson made the following forcible remark on this subject : "Nature held counsel with herself and said, 'My Romans are gone. To build my new Empire, I will choose a rude race, all masculine, with brutish strength. I will not grudge a competition of the roughest males. Let buffalo gore buffalo, and the pasture to the strongest ! For I have work that requires the best will and sinew.'"

The second remark is, that the Latin education of Great Britain was twice begun—first in the time of the Britons, second in the time of Bede and Alcuin—and that on both occasions it was interrupted, and its effects totally obliterated, by the terrible invasions of barbarism, from which it did not thoroughly recover until the eleventh century, since when it has progressed up to the present time. It was in the short interval between the last Danish invasion, that of Harold Hardrada, and the expedition of William the Bastard, that the die was thrown on which had been staked the future of English civilisation. Pure Germanism was the loser, Latinity the winner; and so the foundation was laid of a mixed civilisation, a rich and original combination of traditions and capabilities. Yet in spite of this the Anglo-Saxon race, so long a stranger to Christianity, was later than others in entering into continued intercourse with this Latin civilisation, which was like an accumulated treasure from whence Italy and France borrowed ready-made ideas, and in which they early

found rules of life and principles of organisation greatly superior to their own social state. The first education—or rather apprenticeship—of the Anglo-Saxon race was the rough result of circumstances, and derived no sustained assistance from the common patrimony of Latinity. Its case might be likened to that of those young men who, prevented by a reverse of fortune from following the regular course of their studies, and early thrown into practical life among adventurers in distant lands, grow up there fashioned by circumstances and the force of their own individuality. The Anglo-Saxon race was, in many respects, almost adult when it definitely received its share of the Greco-Latin inheritance. The consequences of this delay can be felt even to-day. Like the men to whom I compare it, the nation has acquired a powerful originality. Like them, it lacks, and perhaps will always lack, what France and Italy owe to their uninterrupted intercourse with antiquity: the simplified mode of thought, classic principle, sobriety, Atticism and refinement of taste, which were derived by these nations from a sort of previous existence, from which England finds herself cut off, or the consciousness of which came to her too late. As a set-off, she has escaped what is artificial and conventional, and overmuch pruned, purged, clarified, and consequently impoverished, in the literatures derived from the Latin and Greek. If English literature generally gives the impression of an overflowing virility and inexhaustible vigour rather than that of perfection; if force is more evident than exact proportion and exquisite arrangement in the work of the great writers on the other side of the Channel; if our appreciation of the shades of difference in manner and style has never been properly experienced in England, if it disappears in the broad, robust and healthy realism and opulent confusion which distinguishes their most original creations, it is chiefly owing to the repeated abortion of the Latin education, and to the first practical education by life and circumstances, which surrendered minds

already formed and resistant to the influence of the antique models.

Though these may be good reasons for disputing the invisible survival of the Celtic genius on English soil, how can we disregard the immense and noisy diffusion of the Norman spirit and its action on the semi-barbarous mass out of which the English nation has been formed? The conquest of 1066 simply dug the bed for the broad human current which, taking its rise on the Continent, flowed on for several centuries. The name Norman is only the condensed and localised term applied to a people which comprehended, besides the Frenchified followers of Rollo, adventurers from all the adjacent provinces, Anjou, Brittany, Maine, Poitou, and later on, more remote places such as Provence and Savoy. The name French, which has been applied to the conquerors since the time of William, is the only one which is approximately accurate. Yet it must be understood less as signifying an ethnical group than a certain type of civilisation and method, of imagination and sensibility, extremely different from those which had already taken shape among the Anglo-Saxons.

Parallel with the invasion of men was the curious invasion of many new forms of literature; the knightly epic poem, in which love held a chief place, romances, allegories, and moralities, satires, songs, fables, biographies, philosophic and judicial treatises. . . . It seemed as if a second army of adventurers had set forth, agile and joyous, like the archers whose light arrows bore down the heavy axes of Harold's followers, and scattering themselves gaily over the surface of the Germanic minds, drove hither and thither their heavy lyricisms. For three centuries these new forms of literature were in vogue, and the turn of mind which prompted them dominant, and when a return was made at length to the primitive type, to it were adapted many of the characteristics of this mask which had been so long applied to the face, as almost to have become part of it.

I am tempted to say, finding no better way of characterising it, of the whole of this period, in which French and Latin writings abounded, whilst the native tongue almost disappeared, that it is in a certain sense *preliterary*, and that, literally speaking, it is not national. The internationality "of this free country and this religious world," to which we owe nearly all the great intellectual production of the middle ages, has been very justly pointed out; in truth, they have no limits. Nearly all the authors of mark born on British soil studied or taught in Paris, travelled in Italy, stayed in Rome, and passed years, or even the whole of their lives, on the Continent. If they espoused the interests of their fellow-countrymen it was with reluctance and indifference. They were half denationalised. They were less English than European, citizens of the great religious and literary republic of which the Court of Rome and the University of Paris were the capitals. All those in Europe who wrote, corresponded one with the other in whatever countries they might be; they drew largely from the same sources, indefatigably treated the same subjects, and copied each other or some common model. Few and faint were the indications of the great national literature shortly to arise.

It must also be noted that England, destined hereafter to excel by reason of the powerful originality of her work, showed herself particularly servile and maladroit in these continual imitations and plagiarisms. We can scarcely entitle "literature" a collection of works to which invention, talent, and style were all wanting. How, indeed, could literary gifts develop among the three languages which divided the future nation, separating the upper class from the mass of the people, and the scholars and lettered from both? Each of these languages was necessarily special and incomplete, incapable of giving the creative imagination the sentiment of unrestricted intercourse with a powerful body of men, all having the same glorious destiny. There

are three things which spring up together and of which each is the condition, the forerunner, and alternately the cause and effect of the others : a national language, a national literature, and, around them, a common life and a collective consciousness, which maintains them, supplies them with subjects, and opens to them a field for expansion, full of prolonged echoes. A national language assumes literary consistency only under the pressure of ideas and new emotions, which passionately seek expression, divining that there exists a large public half unconsciously disposed to receive them, prepared to see itself in them, to be penetrated by them, and to become conscious through them of its profound unity, which they will enlarge and establish yet more firmly. The sign that the evolution is complete and that a conscious nation has definitely separated itself from ethnical groups, is the accession of prose to literary dignity ; and, as a rule, such accession coincides with a vigorous poetic efflorescence. But, until the time of Wycliffe, there was no real English prose, and even his prose can hardly pretend to be literary. Nor, until the same epoch, was there any poetry. The great majority of authors, both French and English, employed rhymthic or rhymed verse which, properly speaking, was neither prose nor poetry. Intervals, echoes, consonances, convey to us nothing of the music we know, designed to arouse harmonious sensations around each thought ; they are merely points in the data of mnemonics, scanning for the ear the monotonous and interminable prattle that was poured out on every subject. It was not until 1350 that the river of English thought divided itself into two arms, to make room for the abundance and impetuosity of the waters which a single bed could not contain.

Nothing is more interesting than the process by which this new nation and new language were evolved. Little by little, the conquerors and the conquered became blended, a single mass was formed, and they could no longer be distinguished

one from the other. After the invasion the enormous power of the prince and his inclination to play the despot with his own Norman vassals brought them nearer to the Saxons, with whom they became united by the common interest of self-defence, afterwards voiced by Parliament. On the other hand, the insular isolation of the people, who had become very sedentary, inclined them to conceive themselves homogeneous and set up a wholesale opposition to the Continental nations. Finally, the pretensions of their kings to the throne of France were to them an occasion for feeling themselves one in their proud individuality; and therefore they protested by the voice of the Commons against a union of the two crowns, which would have made England a dependent of her neighbour (1340). In the same year disappeared the *prèsentement d'Englescherie*, the most striking of the legal inequalities existing between *Francigena* and *Anglicus*. It is probable that this procedure had for a long while fallen into desuetude: for abrogation by law generally followed abrogation by custom.

The language gives curious evidence of the complete fusion of the two races. For more than two centuries French had continually gained ground. With the aid of Latin it supplied and maintained the vocabulary of higher culture—political, legal, financial, and theological. Further, the whole weight of its influence was felt over an even wider area, replacing the Anglo-Saxon dialects in such a degree that it was entitled the "common language." It seemed probable that the German element would disappear as the Celtic had done. This, however, was not the case; but it helps to explain the peculiar formation of the language which took place in the fourteenth century. The uncultivated classes did not cling tenaciously to the use of the original idiom. They tried to speak French, perverting it in the attempt; dropping some portions, by maladroit handling, and retaining others, which became indissolubly blended with their jargon. When the Anglo-Saxon element, which had remained intact under compression, re-

ascended after the manner of a geological strata upheaved by an internal force, French was not like a superficial crust which the inferior language uplifted, detached, and threw off in its entirety; rather did it resemble the concretions, *débris* or crumbs which shoot up with the ascendant element, or the large seams which form part of its substance. Anglo-Saxon itself sustained crushing and erosion. Both idioms emerged with the loss of part of their grammatical and prosodical forms. Thus it was that, confused by the genders of nouns, which were not the same in Anglo-Saxon and French, the new people despaired of ever understanding them, and instead of making a selection called them all neuter. From this upheaval the English language finally emerged, with its simplified grammar, its structure which at first did not lend itself to prose, and its triple and abundant vocabulary: French, Latin, German, each still distinct and recognisable. This composite formation made it possible for the writer, and still more for the poet, to give his style an absolutely individual colour simply by the choice of words. The intermixture and varying proportions of these three elements undoubtedly furnished a long and rich gamut of colours. The language of a Tennyson or a Miss Martineau can be recognised and appreciated before the force of their thoughts and the beauty of their images strike the observer.

After the first literary efflorescence in which flowered, though still very near the soil and the roots, the light blue of Chaucer, the dark violet of Langland, and the sombre red of Wycliffe, these corollas withered, fell off and were not replaced. A sad autumn began, prolonged by a sterile winter, in which all vegetation and life seemed to stop; it was the fourteenth century. Then suddenly there burst out on the full-grown stem, in a magnificent cluster, the genius of Shakespeare, and the literature springing from the same afflux of sap. The national mind had definitely taken possession of itself during its long sleep; henceforth it produced works of extraordinary individuality.

CHAPTER II

THE INDIGENOUS RACES

I.—*Agricultural England.*

The English nation had no longer invasion to fear ; it had its own language and institutions, and was in possession of its own genius. We must now take note of the more important characteristics by which it was distinguished.

After 1066 the nation began to lose its military character, and to acquire the habits of an agricultural population. The Normans, established in their insular territory, began to mix with the Saxons. At the end of a century and a half the fusion was complete, and the two races could no longer be distinguished one from the other. The Continental wars, just commencing, attracted only the more turbulent of the barons ; the others remained at home, mixing with the bulk of the people, and, like them, leading an entirely rural existence—a mode of life which gradually altered their habits. In the fifteenth century even foreigners noticed the change. Poggio writes, "After the French come the inhabitants of Britain, who are now called the English ; they do not consider it correct for a noble to live in a town ; they all live shut in by their fields, forests, and pastures ; they measure nobility by fortune, and concentrate their energies on the cultivation of the land ; they trade in wool and lambs, and see nothing improper in sharing the profits of agriculture." The remnant of the ancient nobility perished in the War of the Roses, and

henceforward the gentleman farmer led the way. No rudiments of manufacturing industry as yet existed in the Island. The English sold their wool to the Flemish, and received manufactured goods in exchange. It was not until 1589 that refugees from Flanders began to teach the insular workers the art of manufacturing woollen goods. The Norwich period now commenced, and lasted throughout the seventeenth century. It is noteworthy that the first motive for this industry was one of the natural products of British soil, and that practically it was only an extension of the agricultural industry: the English were none the less a race of labourers and shepherds, who settled for the most part in the South of England, and were remarkable for their gaiety, these southern counties becoming the *Merry England* of the chroniclers. From the documents of the fifteenth century we gather that they dropped the habit of intense practical work and led a life wholly "spiritual and refined." In nothing that we know of them can we find any trace of the continued and pertinacious effort and activity which distinguish the English of our time.

Some are pleased to say that the English in all ages have proved themselves worthy descendants of the Vikings of Norway, and that the rare qualities they display to-day in commerce and navigation are the heritage, transmitted from century to century, of this race of heroes. Nothing could be more untrue. The Angles and Saxons, in whose veins flowed the restless blood of these adventurers, became the possessors of an extraordinarily fertile country, and eventually succumbed to the temptation of a tranquil life and easily attainable riches. Some centuries later we cannot but be astonished at the awkwardness and incuriosity of their first attempts on the high seas—attempts in which we find no evidence of atavism to experienced pirates or the premonition of a great future. In the middle of the fifteenth century Henry V. borrowed ships from Holland for his expeditions against France. Prior to this epoch the country had no navy to protect her coasts; the

maritime towns protected themselves as best they could. The foreign commerce of Great Britain was entirely in the hands of the Dutch, the Lombards and the Hansards, who were attracted by the bait of immunities and advantages refused to English merchants on English soil, and for which they were not indemnified by reciprocity in the native countries of the privileged foreigners. It was only under Richard II. that there grew up a desire to protect the British flag; but the measures taken to this end had little or no practical effect until the reign of Henry VII. The English did not begin to colonise until the last years of Elizabeth. When the seventeenth century opened they had no possessions outside Europe; they had allowed themselves to be outstripped by the other Powers who bordered the Atlantic. At the end of the sixteenth century we find a very definite statement made by one of the few seafaring men the country possessed at that time—Sir Walter Raleigh. The English navy, he writes, cannot enter into comparison with that of the Dutch. "Following the example of the ancient city of Tyre and the more modern Venice, Holland has become the storehouse of all foreign commodities, the one hundredth part of which are not used in the country. . . . They come to trade with us in 500 or 600 vessels every year, and we send them perhaps thirty or forty. The Dutch trade into all cities and port towns in France, and we with five or six only. . . . They have of their own as many vessels as eleven kingdoms of Christendom have and build a thousand ships a year, and yet there is not one tree in the whole country, and their products would not fill a hundred vessels." This passage is all the more significant for having emanated from the pen of one of the destroyers of the invincible Armada. The dispersion of the Spanish fleet has been considered by more than one writer, as the beginning of English dominion over the seas. This is a grave mistake. It was the tempest, not the English or Dutch ships, which put an end to the Armada. *The Lord sent His wind and scattered them.* Drake was only a

buccaneer, who abandoned the pursuit as soon as the wind got up; and when nothing remained of the expedition England was left with the feeling of a happy chance rather than the consciousness of true maritime greatness.

2.—*England's Commerce and Colonies. The Puritans.*

Two notable events succeeded in changing the character and destinies of England. The first was the discovery of America in 1492. Up to this period European commerce had been concentrated in Genoa, Pisa, Florence, Venice, Augsburg, Troyes, and the Hanse towns: it was essentially Mediterranean and continental. Columbus's discovery opened new markets: it became oceanic, and passed into the hands of the five Powers which bordered on the Atlantic. This displacement was quite natural; but in connection with it one fact is somewhat surprising. Portugal was the first to enter on the scene; then Spain, then Holland. These three Powers were at the zenith of their colonial prosperity during the second half of the sixteenth century. France began to move later, but even then she was in advance of England. This latter country was the last to appear, and a century was required for her to make up for lost time. It was only at the Peace of Utrecht in 1713 that she became recognised as a great naval Power which aspired to the dominion of the seas.

This delay was the more surprising because England was admirably situated to profit by American commerce. Of the five Powers whose ports opened on the Atlantic, she was the nearest to the New World. Her coastline is more than two thousand miles in extent—nearly double that of the shores of France. An Englishman set down anywhere on the British mainland would never be more than twenty-five leagues from the coast. The ports are numerous; the mouths of the rivers form deep roadsteads. The tide ascends to a great distance from the sea, bringing vessels into the capital as far as London

Bridge, and into Bristol three leagues beyond the point of junction of the Severn and the Avon. In addition to these natural advantages there were other circumstances which, in the long run, would infallibly give England the upper hand in a struggle for possessions beyond the seas. Portugal and Holland have Continental bases too circumscribed to seat a great colonial Empire. Spain and France were divided between two interests: the Continental interest, which was the mainspring of their politics; and the colonial interest, which simply furnished them with extra supplies. It was of far more consequence to a Spaniard to preserve his Italian possessions than to augment his possessions in America. It was far less important to France to create an empire on the St. Lawrence than to extend her empire in Europe as far as the Rhine or the Pyrenees, thereby filling in Nature's framework. From all these points of view England had obvious advantages. She had the extent and heart of a great Power. For centuries she had occupied the whole of her island; there was nothing more to covet, for her limits were natural ones. She could not extend her boundaries, and to aggrandise herself, what was there she could demand on the Continent in the sphere of influence of one of the great European States? When the hour of division came she was therefore forced to cast her eyes on some colonial possession. It was ceded to her without regret, and once ceded was too far removed to be worth the trouble of taking back. England, it might be said, was fated to see her possessions beyond the seas suddenly growing; in spite of herself she was thrust into the *rôle* of a great colonial Power.

We may therefore be somewhat surprised that the seventeenth century should have come and gone before England was installed and recognised in her position of aspirant to the dominion of the seas. As we have said, in 1600 she had no possessions outside Europe. During the first half of the century, the occupation of New England and the growth of

Virginia were chiefly owing to the persecutions which, in turns, rendered England uninhabitable for the Puritans and the Cavaliers. The grant to Lord Baltimore of a fief in Maryland can hardly be counted among the enterprises stamped with the true colonial spirit. The restless spirit of the age caused men to make up their minds and act with promptitude. In the year 1625 the number and variety of publications on commerce were extraordinary. The effect was soon seen ; from 1590 to 1641 the Custom House duties rose from £14,000 to £500,000. A new era began with the Act of Navigation. In spite of more than one annulment and amendment, this Act had the direct effect of suppressing the profitable monopoly of the coasting trade which the Low Countries carried on with the English ports, and of chasing away the hardy bands of Dutch fishermen who cast their nets round the shores of Great Britain, selling in the very country itself the fish which the inhabitants had not as yet thought of disputing with them. The acquisition of Jamaica rendered the last years of Cromwell illustrious ; it was confirmed under Charles II. in 1670. In the time of the two Stuarts the greater part of the coastline between Massachusetts and Virginia was conquered by the English, who established themselves in New York, Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Colonisation had not, as yet, been begun in other parts. Bombay, ceded to Charles II. in 1661, was practically the only settlement of the East India Company ; and Fort William, in 1688, gave little indication of the immense development of Calcutta in the near future. It is difficult to understand this slow progress on the part of a people endowed, in an unusual degree, with the necessary qualifications.

However, other significant facts explain why the work of colonisation was retarded. The law with regard to landed property, for example, was adapted to the requirements of an agricultural population. Whilst the Dutchman, when short of money, easily mortgaged his domain, his neighbours found it

very difficult—indeed, almost impossible—to raise a mortgage. In Holland, money could be borrowed at 3 per cent., and even less. In England, the legal and actual interest was 8 per cent. The sole money-lenders of the kings were the goldsmiths, and it was not until 1694 that, by the founding of the Bank of England, they were able to obtain larger amounts than the sum of one year's revenue. England had, as it were, by breaking the chain of venerable habits, made a past for these new traditions. The transformation was complete in 1700. For a certain period the English had the same sovereign as the Dutch. They were able to study at first hand and to imitate the methods of this leading mercantile nation. When the link was broken, Amsterdam ceased to be the commercial capital of the world, and London soon succeeded her. Henceforward Holland steadily declined, and in the struggle which ensued between France and Great Britain she took little part. France in her turn was conquered and despoiled : one after the other she yielded up Acadia, Canada and the Empire of the Indies, and could no longer be reckoned as a colonial Power of the first rank. England stood alone and without a rival. In 1713 her supremacy was recognised, but she had as yet only her equal share in the possessions over-seas. In 1763 the equilibrium was destroyed ; outside Europe the Spanish colonies alone rivalled in greatness those of the British Empire. This result was not attained merely by treaties following on memorable wars ; England meanwhile had traversed seas hitherto unknown and established flourishing settlements which linked her store-houses together, and consolidated her dominion.

By degrees there grew up a race composed of bold sailors, intrepid colonists, and merchants eager for gain ; honest in trade, because good faith is a condition of commerce, dishonest in everything else ; heedless of their obligations to other powers, and inhuman and cruel beyond all expression. Under Cromwell they prepared an expedition with the avowed object of taking the Spanish galleons by surprise, and chance only

hindered its fulfilment. Simultaneously with the peace of Utrecht, they concluded with Spain the treaty of Assiento, by which the slave trade with the Spanish colonies passed into their hands; and on this trade they based the whole of their policy during the eighteenth century. This race, unknown in preceding generations, embarked upon a career of unbridled pride and insatiable avidity; and the spirit which animated and sustained them now inspires, after a period of stagnation and doubt, what we call imperialism. They were persuaded of their vocation to the empire of the seas and expressed it with a naïve and brutal arrogance, sincerely believing that to come under English dominion was for any barbarous country a normal event, and the happiest that could befall it. To them there was something more important than the spirit and letter of treaties; viz., the necessity, which they proclaimed upon the housetops, that the English should hold sway in certain parts of the earth. The highest aim of their missionaries was, not to convert the heathen, but to place them under the protection of a people chosen by God. The sudden explosion of these sentiments was the result of two centuries of preparation, which had wrought up to the highest degree of intensity passions to which England, prior to 1500, had been absolutely a stranger.

But it was not external conditions alone which had an effect on the nation, furnishing the mould for a new race; another cause intervened, which operated in the depths of the individual conscience. This cause, which altered men's outlook on the world, toleration of human passions, and acceptance of life and of death, was the Reformation. It too created a new people, composed of all those who came under its influence. This extraordinary growth was not due to Anglicanism, for that had not the requisite efficacy. In the beginning Anglicanism was merely an expedient for passing the authority of the Church out of the hands of the Pope into those of the King. All that was possible was retained from Catholicism—the episcopal hierarchy, the apostolic transmission, and a large number of

rites. For the greater security, a minimum of Calvinism was introduced, as a guarantee and safeguard against a return to Papistry. Anglicanism was, in the main, merely a more or less reasonable compromise, a religion of gentlemen and men of the world who required a certain luxury of collective ceremonies to fill the place of the individual faith so often absent, and who attached themselves to a liturgy in order to retain the illusion that they believed in something. It is remarkable that the two phases of belief into which the extreme forms of Anglicanism have constantly been tempted to resolve, are on the one side Puseyism and even Catholicism, and on the other the Broad Church : on the one side a poetic flight which led the English back to the ancient institutions of the Middle Ages, the cenobitical life, the care of the poor, and, first and foremost, the antiquity of tradition ; on the other, a positive mind, which, in enlarging its doctrines, impaired their foundations, leaving only vain symbols standing. Thus the natural tendency of Anglicanism was not to fortify belief, but rather to weaken it, as was rendered peculiarly obvious by the perseverance with which it repulsed Wesley. Of the two sides its instinctive inclination is, either to stifle faith under forms to which tradition alone lent some life, or to ruin it by an analysis which leaves only the empty moulds standing.

Very different was the effect of Puritanism, of the Baptists, and some of the other reformed sects. Puritanism was, above all things, religious individualism. What the Independents most vehemently rejected was the yoke of the State, the control of a civil power which regarded itself as holder and dispenser of the truth. The idea of a material authority clumsily and brutally handling a man's most sacred feelings and personal convictions inspired them with a sort of horror. Therefore it is by no means astonishing to find nothing among them resembling a profession of faith. They did not conceive one Church, but Churches ; and if on one occasion, at the Conference of Savoy, they hazarded a sort of confessional

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declaration, it might have been asked what power would be sufficiently well equipped to constrain a congregation which had sincerely seceded from it. Thus the Puritan realised this antinomy : to have a common faith which linked him to other men, and which permitted numerous congregations all over the country to bear the same name, and, on the other hand, to preserve the local and individual character of this faith, making it so personal and intimate an operation of each conscience, that it seemed to owe nothing to tradition. The Baptists went even further. They recognised as a supreme guide, sudden inspiration, the direct calling of the heart by God Himself.

But it was not only his jealous love of independence which distinguished the Puritan and constituted his strength ; it was the intensity of his faith, the omnipresence of a belief which coloured his whole life and interposed at every turn. This it was which made the Puritan an incomparable colonist. Doubtless his belief did not render him exceptionally apt at ploughing a furrow, housing his corn, and making exact calculations, but it gave him a moral stamina which was always perceptible under his qualities as a man of business. The emigrant launched himself upon the unknown ; with him was God his Saviour. He could face death with serenity ; it had no terrors for him. Life appeared to him as a succession of duties which could be fulfilled without scenic effects, or a thought as to what the world would say. It was sufficient if God and his ever-present conscience were satisfied. Of such individuals as this was that Puritan stock constituted which had so large a share in the building up of American greatness. We cannot follow their progress in history for two or three centuries, beginning with the landing of the *Mayflower*, without feeling ourselves in the presence of a young or rejuvenated race, which had drawn an austere freshness of impression, a vigour, constancy, and unusual tenacity from the revived source of Christianity. Before and

after the Declaration of Independence they were everywhere to be found; foremost in emigration and colonisation, and in the front of every enterprise, a part of the ferment of the New World. There is no exaggeration in saying that Puritanism, the creed of the Baptists, and, later, Presbyterianism and Wesleyanism, were pre-eminently the creeds of the emigrants. The population of the New World, and of the English possessions outside Europe, was made up for the most part of these Dissenters. The Wesleyans and the Baptists are relatively small communities in England; but they are in reality immense communities, the greatness of which can only be appreciated when they convoke a meeting in London of the delegates of their adherents all the world over. At such times they must be recognised as a special race which, originating in the Reformation, took upon itself the work of colonisation and made it a success, where, at the same epoch, and on the same territory, the French and the Spanish failed. In the Mother Country, where they have remained in the minority, they constitute a serious, ardent, and earnest element, which had formerly been lacking in Merry England.

How can we estimate and gauge the efficacy of this new element? It can be done by comparing England as a colonising power, for the most part Puritan, with Spain, obdurately impregnated with Catholicism and Jesuitism. Spain no longer added to the immense empire she had conquered, even allowing portions to slip out of her hands. Gold and spices were all she obtained from it, and the chief feature of the government she imposed on the native population was passive obedience. Thus she renounced progress. With England, the reverse was the case. Her emigrant was a man who had escaped from the prison called civilised society; who had broken all the bonds which attached him to the State and ecclesiastical authority; who was free, save, perhaps, for the ties he himself had formed. For the first time social obligations seemed on the point of being recognised. This brusque

individuality, this personality all angles and corners, made a compact with his fellows to respect the rights of each individual. In the beginning this compact was confined to a parish, and thus the emigrants lived for a time ; then one parish combined with another, separated again, reunited, and finally the State was formed. We, on the contrary, find already formed the State of which we are to become part ; they were anterior and superior to their State, and made a place for it, whereas our State makes a place for us.

3.—*Wesley. Industrial England.*

After the Restoration the favourites of Charles II. returned from exile with an ungovernable desire for enjoyment, and abandoned themselves to it without restraint. Society adopted the tone of a courtesan ; the contagion spread little by little, and even the chief citizens were affected by it. It was a period of licence, cynicism, and utter impiety. Nonconformity, compromised by the revolutionary excesses, had lost its hold on the hearts of the people. The inferior classes, terribly ignorant, opposed a wall of stupidity to all spiritual teaching. "In England there is no religion at all," Montesquieu said ; and Voltaire wrote about the same time, "They are so lukewarm in England that a new or revived religion would have only the shadow of a chance." It was at this juncture that Wesley appeared. It is curious that the movement to which he gave his name took its rise in the bosom of Anglicanism, *i.e.*, a communion in which faith and piety no longer existed. Wesley undertook to restore these virtues without changing its articles of faith, or establishing a new sect. With laudable obstinacy he refused to separate himself from the Established Church. He began by soliciting the favour of permission to preach in the Anglican places of worship, and would not be rebuffed by the contemptuous refusals his suggestion received. Later on, when he did organise a separate

foundation for his numerous followers, he would not allow the sacraments to be administered to them in the Wesleyan chapels; they had to demand and receive them in the churches dependent on the State. It was not until four years after his death that, owing to the stubborn ill-will of the bishops, the council which exercised the powers of government in Wesley's stead allowed the communion to be administered to those who expressed a desire to receive it; but even this permission was accorded with hesitation and extreme caution.

Wesley was neither an heresiarch nor the founder of a sect. He did not hold with the doctrine of the Established Church. He paid no heed to the Thirty-nine Articles, apparently ignoring their existence. He always refused to give a profession of faith to his followers in England. When he felt it incumbent upon him to draw one up for the United States, he contented himself with cutting out the dogmatic part of the Thirty-nine Articles, and arranging the remainder as well as he could in the form of a declaration. Orthodoxy, he said, cannot transform the moral being; rather is it the transformed moral being which confers a value on orthodoxy. Hence it is man himself and the force of his conviction which give a high significance to faith. The important point is to renew the living sources of piety, not to be over-particular regarding the terms of a declaration of belief. Moreover, all extreme opinions were repugnant to Wesley. On the one hand he repudiated antinomianism, and the quietism of the Moravians; and, on the other, the exaggerated Calvinism of Whitefield. Religion, as conceived by him, free from all subtlety and theological singularity, could be understood even by the simplest intelligences, and was specially adapted to the men of the middle and lower classes to whom he addressed his teaching.

The fate of the Reformation, and consequently of England herself, was hanging in the balance. If the Anglican Church had yielded to the solicitations of Wesley and given him the

charge of a parish, there would have been an end to the great movement which was to originate with him and make his name illustrious. The narrow-mindedness and obstinacy of the Anglicans decided it otherwise. Wesley was forced to organise the multitude of the faithful who trod in his footsteps outside the Established Church, and he did it freely and fully. He had no ecclesiastical habits to overcome when he formed the corps of itinerant ministers who had the universe for a parish, and hardly knew in the morning where, when the evening came, they would lay their heads. Truly it was necessary that these men, to whom were shut the doors of every place of worship with roof and walls, should resign themselves to speak to the people in the fields and at the crossways. Finally, Wesley did not associate himself, for the purpose of preaching, even with the auxiliary laity who, in time, played so considerable a part in the Church; they, doubtless, would have been turned aside by the prejudice of custom and the jealousy of class if Wesley had been forced into the position of putting them to the proof. In short, he set to work to establish the communion of his followers as he would have done, not for a dissenting Church, but for a great society of religious propaganda; and on it he expended his indefatigable energy and his talent for organisation. The three great innovations of which I have spoken were institutions obviously adapted to a period of missions, an apostleship amongst a new people, the United States of America for instance, where, as a matter of fact, they have been preserved, whilst in England they became modified, and gradually gave rise to the regular medium of a Church.

It was not to the frivolous and corrupt upper classes that Wesley addressed his teaching, but rather to the middle classes, and more especially to artisans. Amongst them he found a virgin force, a singular emotional activity, and an ingenuousness which no objections could trouble nor hinder in a desire for belief; qualities which, maintained by an absolute and

sovereign ignorance, caused him to disdain reason and ignore science. It was, moreover, a fact eminently characteristic of England that in 1740 a man as eminent as Wesley, destined to exercise a profound influence both on his own century and afterwards, could be so entirely destitute of all scientific knowledge, so impervious to all argument and refutation dictated either by good sense or mental culture. Wesley played his part in the world to the accompaniment of miracles, visions and revelations from afar. His preachings on hell and damnation provoked in his audiences nervous seizure, convulsions and hysteria: these he witnessed without disturbance or disgust, and with an invincible self-confidence. Satan occupied a large place in his thoughts; he frequently declared he believed in magic; accusations against witches did not displease him, rather the contrary. Lastly, the extreme narrowness of his mind was manifested in his criticisms of the antique statues representing images of the gods. Such ideas readily take root in virgin and uncultivated minds, side by side with two beliefs which continue to exist even when education has done its work, viz., a belief in sin and in justification by faith. Though exposed in the beginning to the railleries and contempt of the upper classes, Wesley eventually obtained a certain authority over them by his tenacity and conscientious perseverance. During an existence, the active part of which lasted for more than fifty years, his sincerity and earnestness knew no change; and this it was which won the heart of the English and convinced them more than the most weighty arguments could have done. Wesley and his followers founded in Wales, England, the United States and Canada a great Church numbering four million believers, and influencing more than twenty million people. Its progress has been continuous. But what was more decisive still was the change this serious conception and clear view of life made even in those who did not participate in it: the upper classes, who, by reason of the superficial idea they had formed of the spiritual

world, found facile reasons for disdaining these austere and smileless men, little by little changed their tone when they came into contact with Wesleyan gravity. Even without leaving their own Church they began to understand its teachings; their ministers had more trouble in dealing with their awakened consciences, and gradually the English became the reflective, serious and sincere people whom we have learned to esteem. In this sense we can say that the Reformation of Wesley created a new race of men, very different, in truth, from that known to a Bolingbroke or a Fielding.

Parallel with this moral and inner revolution was an outward one equally remarkable in its results, viz., the industrial revolution of the eighteenth century. In 1600 England ceased to be a purely agricultural country; she became mercantile and colonising. Shortly before 1800 her transformation was complete; her characteristics were more than ever those of a pastoral people. The 160,000 petty proprietors, who, with their families made up a seventh of the total population, were gradually eliminated: the bailiffs of the great lords seduced them with advantageous offers, and soon the immense fields of the *latifundia* covered the ground but lately occupied by the habitations of a vanished race. On the other hand, this change in the ownership of the land threw out of work a large number of people who turned for employment to the manufacturing industry. This industry assumed an entirely different aspect; the prospect of a steady wage attracted to it the miserable labourers who had hitherto partly subsisted on alms. The discoveries of Kay and Arkwright had substituted the weaving machine for the loom, the apparatus worked by steam for that put in motion by the energy of man; large sections of the working population, clustered around the horizontal shaft and living on their wages, for the various labourers scattered about the country and subsisting chiefly on the products of their plot of ground. A class sprang up which

rapidly peopled a part of England that had hitherto lain waste. In 1685 there were only four towns besides London, which had more than ten thousand inhabitants: Bristol, Exeter, Norwich, and York, all in the south or east of England. This new class, on the other hand, settled in the midlands and north, in villages hitherto nameless, or in fresh districts: Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool—to name simply the three greatest urban agglomerations—became centres of teeming life, where work was done shoulder to shoulder, and human intercourse was continuous. Personal matters were the chief topic of conversation, and they all held themselves on the defensive; they had something to say on spiritual matters; they formed their own conception of their duties, rights and dignity, surrounding it with an atmosphere of religion, and blending with it an afterthought for their health. They were English, *i.e.*, they needed a Church of their own, distinct from that of the other classes. They welcomed Independent, Wesleyan, and Baptist ministers, who adapted their teachings to their new followers. A certain earnestness and ingenuous faith took root in their hearts, together with a dislike for rites and ceremonies, a sort of iconoclastic superstition. At the beginning of the century the transformation was accomplished: England was a different country, inhabited by a population whose existence had hitherto been unsuspected, and whose position in fifty years had become consolidated even to the shores of the great British Isle. This new England came forward with economic conditions, political pretensions, moral customs, a religious ideal, a conscience and virtues which had hitherto been ignored by the rest of the country: truly it was a new race grafted on to the old one. I can only compare it to a colony of emigrants, who, after settling themselves over-seas in a sparsely populated country, and adopting a mode of existence for which they had no precedent, social customs unknown in the old world, and a conception of life from a new point of view, were suddenly re-united to the mother country in consequence of a geological

upheaval, and became so completely a part of her that their general interests and government merged into one.

4.—*Wales, Scotland, and Ireland.*

The last influence apparently exercised over England was that of the Celtic populations, who had fallen under her dominion and made part of the same insular group. Wales and Scotland, as it were, adhere to the flanks of the English mainland; Ireland is only separated by a narrow channel. These three countries are concealed and cut off from other nations by the vast triangle interposed between them and Europe. The ocean completes their isolation. Geography and history have spared them a tête-à-tête of several centuries with their powerful and only neighbour. Scotland is the one exception to the rule: she has had some relations with France; but the fusion of races by the mingling of men ought to have taken place chiefly in England.

It is rather singular that these conditions, so favourable to reciprocity, and, in the long run, close union between the vanquished peoples and their conquerors, should have had such abortive and tardy results. We find a reason for it in the character of the Englishman. Let us take these peoples in their own countries, as the Englishman has had to do; it is easy to see that what is most characteristic in his ideas, feelings, and habits of life has had no serious influence on the Scotch, Welsh, or Irish. The Englishman is haughty and taciturn; he does not voluntarily explain the reason of his actions; he has no pity nor sympathy, he is even deficient in good manners and good temper. He does not possess that indescribable amiability and charm which characterise a Frenchman's every action, and any evidence he may give of redeeming qualities is discounted by his arrogant and contemptuous manner. The effect of general civilisation has been felt in the three countries; during the last century they have

progressed in their relations with England because they have progressed in their relations with the whole world. These peoples have grown to resemble each other ; but the influence of the English has had no part in the transformation ; even now they excite the same dislike and encounter the same opposition as in the past.

This is markedly evident throughout the entire history of Ireland. The Englishman established himself in that country by force, and, significant fact, governs it by force. He began by driving the Irish back beyond the pale, and a little later became master of the whole island. He cemented his dominion under Elizabeth and Cromwell by conscientious massacres. On the field of battle he made no prisoners ; he hunted the fugitives like wild beasts, and transported the inhabitants of an entire district to Barbadoes as slaves. It was a war of extermination. The virile and adult portion of the population almost entirely disappeared, and after every rebellion the nation took longer to recover itself. At these crises the language retrograded, and eventually made way for the English language, all the grown men and old men, who could speak it and teach it to their children, having been killed. It rested with England to conciliate by good treatment all the survivors of the vanquished race, making of them a new people, more susceptible to the attraction of a superior civilisation than to the remembrance of an ancient enmity. This the Englishman did not attempt, and would not have succeeded in doing. He could never bring himself to imitate the familiarity and easy good nature of the Irishman ; he has always considered the conquered nation as an inferior and contemptible race, who could only be maintained in subjection by a code of barbarous laws which, to a certain extent, place it outside the pale of common equity. It has never for a moment occurred to him that this system of extreme oppression, instead of suppressing smouldering rebellion, maintains, perpetuates, and exasperates its causes. Besides this,

private spoliations and legal confiscations and dispossessions extending sometimes to a whole district, have gradually reduced the masters of the soil to the condition of simple proletarians who can no longer dwell on the lands of their fathers save by cultivating them on behalf of the stranger lord. This eviction has been so general that there are very few old Irish families who now own a portion of the national territory. Those who still live on, cultivating their land for the usurper, feel in the depths of their hearts that they are the lawful owners, and that the day must come when the estates of their ancestors will again be theirs, and they will chase away the insolent possessors of the hour. Thus they continue to exist, a dull anger burning in their hearts. The relations of Ireland with England for several centuries have been those of the captive and his gaoler, the victim and his executioner.

Wales was joined to England at the end of the thirteenth century, and in the sixteenth century her representatives first took their seats in Parliament. The expression "England and Wales" conveys the idea that the two countries are one from the point of view of the legislator and the statesman. Scotland was definitely annexed in 1603 by a dynastic union, and in 1707 the two Parliaments were merged into one. Finally, the union with Ireland dates back just a century. Is it possible to imagine France occupying the position towards one of her dependencies which England has adopted towards these three Celtic countries: certainly she would not have taken a century to merge their individuality in her own and efface the differences which might hinder the establishment of a general system of government. England in this connection has shown herself the solitary and unsociable nation we have described; she has disdained to mingle with her Celtic subjects, or to make them her equals; she has isolated herself in her pride.

How many differences, as a matter of fact, still exist between one people and the other! In the first place the three countries of which I have spoken profess a different religion to

that of their conquerors: Ireland is Catholic, Wales to a great extent Methodist, and Scotland Presbyterian. The latter even regards the Presbyterian as her Established Church. This democratic form of belief, which admits no human authority and will not tolerate any civil power above the Church of Jesus Christ, has received all the privileges of the Established Church on the other side of the Tweed; and yet if a member of this Church crosses the frontier he finds himself looked down upon and classed among the Dissenters whom the State refuses to recognise. These different denominations must not be considered merely as the sign of each people's preference for a certain mode of conceiving religion and its relations with the State. There is something more in it than that. The Irish, the Scotch, and the Welsh have each clung to their creed, partly from a spirit of contradiction; professing it with the more fervour because it is not that of the English; in it they have found a sure means of separating themselves from a detested race, even though it be in prayer, which should make all men equal and brothers before God.

The second point that should be noted is the manner in which Parliament legislates for the different parts of the United Kingdom. There is not merely one universal code of laws. Besides those laws which embrace the whole of the United Kingdom, there are some which only apply to Great Britain, others to England, and others again to Scotland; finally, there are some which only concern Ireland. Of these different sections of the legislative work, the four last are not the least numerous; on the contrary, the rule is, that the majority of statutes are not applicable to the whole of the United Kingdom. The consequence is that, with the exception of Wales, which has been almost invariably identified with England for nearly four centuries, the countries which go to make up the United Kingdom can, on a great number of points, exhibit statutes which simply concern themselves. No circumspection has been employed in dealing with Ireland; as a conquered country

she has to submit to the law of the conqueror. The civil and penal laws of England have been imposed upon her; and yet how far she is from being a mere fraction, indistinguishable from other fractions in the group of the United Kingdom. The application of the English criminal laws, particularly the Habeas Corpus Act, has so often been suspended that arbitrary arrests seem quite in the natural order of things and in accordance with the law; further, the department of the public ministry has been placed on a permanent footing. The law of property is complicated with ideas handed down from the time of the clans, ideas to which the English find no parallel in their own past. The thoroughly Irish system prevailing in Ulster has been extended to the whole country; local administration has been constructed on a different plan to that in vogue on the other side of the St. George's Channel, and the special titles of the officials, as well as the compass of their prerogatives, attest the fact that here we enter another world. Scotland for a long time, both in her customs and her laws, differed essentially from England. During the last fifty years she has made great strides towards a more complete union, but many differences still separate the two countries. For instance, the Scotch have never recognised the distinction between law and equity; even now they have no Habeas Corpus Act.[1] The public ministry is strongly represented at headquarters by the Lord Advocate and his colleagues, and in the provincial towns by the procurators fiscal. Examination is conducted in private. In former days Scotland had a special civil law, which, in process of time, has lost its most striking peculiarities. There were perpetual amendments to it, the number of which was not limited until 1848, in imitation of the English amendments. Scotch marriages used to be concluded without forms or the intervention of guardians, but the law intervened in 1878 to encourage "regular marriages." The laws regulating commerce are by no means identical in the three countries. The system of parliamentary elections did

[1] TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.—Scotland has the equivalent of Habeas Corpus in an Act 19 & 20 Vict. cap. 56, sec. 17.

not become universal until 1868, or rather 1884. Municipal organisation, founded on that of England, was adopted by Scotland in 1885, and by Ireland in 1899. The separation between Scotland and England is made particularly evident by the fact that the Scotch law has no judiciary value in the English courts of justice, where it is regarded merely as a point the authority of which is entirely dependent on evidence.[1]

The third point to be noted is the almost ineradicable difference in manners and customs. Neither the Scotch, the Irish, nor the Welsh have borrowed anything from the English. Wales, although in many respects now identified with England, has yet always been a kind of enigma to her neighbour, which the latter does not condescend to decipher. The English, as Mr. Osborne Morgan said, are better acquainted with the Soudan than with Wales; and by the English he did not mean those who occasionally spent their vacations in the principality, but those who had lived there for long years; they regard the Welsh, he said, as a peculiar species of Englishmen living in a town the name of which it is impossible to pronounce, and preferring a musical festival to a horse-race.

It is sufficient to hear an English gentleman speak of his Irish and English tenants in order to perceive that he considers the first as foreigners, in connection with whom all the laws, human and divine, which he is accustomed to obey in dealing with the latter, lose their authority and cease to restrain him. The Irish, on the other hand, have always considered the annexation of their country by England as a scandalous act, which could only have been consummated by the most barefaced corruption: they have never ceased to protest against it. The Scotch were, at first, decidedly hostile to the treaty of 1707, but eventually accepted it. The memory of it was hateful a hundred years later to her more enlightened citizens—Smollet,

[1] Stephen's *Commentaries*, vol. i. Introd., sect. iv. p. 90.

for example, and Walter Scott. At the epoch when the treaty was concluded, Scotland was still very poor while England was excessively rich. The Scotch peer could not come to London to take part in the Parliamentary debates without the assistance of the Queen. It is said that at this time very few from the Highlands and even from the Lowlands had crossed the Tweed and returned from England with a gayer mien. Then again, Scotland, who, since the time of John Knox, had been plunged in a sombre theological dream, and preoccupied, even in her lowest classes, with subtle interpretations of the sacred Book, was incapable of comprehending the ideas, sentiments and customs of a nation more at one with the world, more sensible of material interests, less infatuated with religion and, in short, more prone to scepticism. Two centuries did not efface these differences nor soften the dislike of one nation for the other. Some years ago Mr. Lowe testified to the fact that when the Scotch come to London they lodge in Scotch hotels and employ Scotch tradesmen. In fact, an absence of all sympathy with the English and their customs is apparent in every word and deed of Scotch, Irish, and Welsh.

But the enmity of Ireland, Scotland, and Wales towards their conquerors is particularly marked in questions of government, and here Ireland appears more and more as a foreign nation. Against five millions of Irish in the island adjacent to England, there are ten millions in America, still wholly subject to the customs, passions, and prejudices peculiar to their native land. In the United States the great majority of the Irish find ease or riches, and a boundless liberty which can be enjoyed without let or hindrance. Certain that England cannot touch them, they encourage their European brothers in criminal and revolutionary enterprises, helping them largely from their own resources. Ireland once succeeded, thanks to certain favourable circumstances, in gaining over the first statesman in England to her side and with him nearly the whole Whig party ; she will never forget that Home Rule has figured on the pro-

gramme of the Liberal party, that the majority voted for it, and that no one can now treat it as a chimera without accusing Mr. Gladstone of frivolity or inconsequence. Further, nearly all the representatives of Scotland and Wales declared with the Irish in favour of this measure, and it is evident that every part of the United Kingdom, with the exception of England, has a decided inclination towards the federative system, and would be disposed to welcome any organisation by which the weakening of the central power would lead to a greater independence and almost autonomy on the part of the local power in each of the three countries. In fact Scotland is already in possession of this autonomy. Her representatives in the House of Commons form a group who are allowed to settle the questions which interest their nation almost as they will. It is a little Parliament in the big one, and a sort of Home Rule by tacit consent. Is it not singular that in two centuries the community of interests has made so little progress, and that even now Scotland, under the veil of a Parliamentary fiction, is not allowed to settle finally the questions which are her own concern?

It has been said more that once that Great Britain is only a geographical expression ; this is true of the United Kingdom as a whole : it does not constitute a political unity, and still less a moral unity. Each of its four parts feels its own individuality, and is conscious of a distinct life. It forms a whole more than federative and less than federal.

England, while pre-eminently unsociable abroad, is at home most liberal, hospitable and easy with strangers. The Scotch, Welsh, and Irish, who energetically oppose the adoption of any British customs in their own countries, are by no means insensible to the conveniences of residence which England offers them, and the number of those who live there varies between 750,000 and 850,000, a figure which corresponds to a tenth of the population of the two countries. In England they enjoy absolute liberty. The English character, therefore, is, to a certain extent, complicated. Once there was only one national

mind in England, because there was only one nation. Now there are, psychologically and morally, three nations in one. By the union of races Scotland and Ireland have more or less enriched the common fund with their particular endowments, and, in the same way, their failings have been more or less propagated in the mass of the people. The Irish are like the Italians of the United Kingdom, and the Scotch like the Germans. The influence of the first has been felt more especially in their gift of writing for, and speaking to, the masses. To mention only the most striking example of this influence we may say, that it was their natural talent in the preparation of pamphlets which, utilised in every cause, contributed more than all else to the development of the empire of that fourth power—the Press. It was chiefly their oratorical intemperance and disdain of rules which completely altered Parliamentary manners and decorum, rendered the system of closure indispensable, and hastened the day when the House of Commons ceased to be a salon of correct and self-confident gentlemen and became a forum in which the police were required. The Scotch inoculated England with learned political economy and philosophy. They supplied her with the exalted experimentalism which has become superposed upon her flat empiricism.

5.—*Insularity. The Provincial in Europe.*

Here is a river, a mountain, and a plateau which separate two nations. On either side of this boundary extends a zone the inhabitants of which, in consequence of uninterrupted intercourse, resemble their compatriots in a far smaller degree than their immediate neighbours. The traveller, on returning to his own country, first encounters this degradation of the exotic type which is imperceptibly reproduced in a gradation towards the national type. The opposing traits of race and nationality are therefore less decided here than elsewhere ; a foreigner is

not necessarily a dissimilar being, rendered hateful by the effect of his dissimilarity; he is by no means the *hostis* in the primitive sense of the word in whom each man sees an enemy. On the contrary, in an arm of the sea like the Channel the imperceptible line traced between the two countries first of all separates two zones of uninhabited stormy wave. This *pontus dissociabilis* forms a more effective barrier between the two nations than the highest chain of mountains. The man who has to cross the sea to return to his native land and watches the shore fading behind him in the distance, feels himself an absolute stranger to everything outside the girdle of moving water. In any part of his island, he feels far more at home and different to other men, than a Frenchman feels on any part of the strip of territory which borders his frontier. England is not only an island, but a continent. No other country has so loudly protested that she is sufficient for herself, nor regarded with greater suspicion the ideas and manners of Europe. She has sometimes imitated other countries, but the imitation has generally been as fleeting as a fantasy and superficial as a fashion; the multitude has not been affected by it, remaining faithful to its original character. In short, for a long period opportunities of contact between foreigners and the masses were rare in England; rare too were the forms of activity by which the stimulated intelligence escapes to a certain extent from itself. The first training of the English nation took place in a comparatively circumscribed area; at first they breathed a heavy and changeless atmosphere. There is no other nation in whose case the progress of the great majority has been so long retarded, who is younger in civilisation, or in whom the strong, coarse simplicity of the primitive type has been less untouched. Neither is there any people in whom the individual bias of the national mind and character has had more opportunity of becoming individualised and solidified; and the result of all this is, that the English genius has assumed an exceptional individuality and tenacity. Even in the present day in the

unsheltered, hurried life of the contemporary Englishman, the extremely resistant individuality of his character retains the traces of this unique training. Who has not encountered on the Continent the tourist whose clothes exhale a peculiar odour brought from London ? In the same way be brings with him a spiritual atmosphere not easily penetrated, which keeps ideas, like men, at a distance, and behind which the moral and intellectual life handed down to him by his father flows changelessly on. Setting aside all differences, he might be compared to the French native of a region remote from the metropolis who, before the invention of railways, might have visited the great city. The " provincial in Paris " might have had that curious, attentive and excited air of a man undergoing a profound experience ; in reality, it has no effect upon him, he returns to his native land with the turn of mind, which had been slowly formed and transmitted down the ages, absolutely intact. The Englishman is always more or less the " provincial in Europe." His spirit is like a liquor which, having for a long time been preserved from shaking, becomes concentrated and thickened, until it has no longer sufficient fluidity to mingle with others.

This peculiar trend and want of affinity in the English character plays an important part in the progress and effects of British colonisation. The English have never formed a mongrel race with the autochthonic population of any country they have subjugated. They resemble a metal, the point of fusion of which is too high : it cannot be alloyed. They have never placed a conquered people on an equality with themselves, nor have they any conception of the art of conciliating them. They only know how to oppress them, make use of them, crush or destroy them. The French were loved by the Indians of North America, and found in them faithful allies. The Spanish, by intermixing with the natives of Mexico, Peru and Central America, formed a race which by degrees became initiated in the highest European culture. The Redskins, on

the contrary, who lived on the borders of the United States, were cantoned, demoralised, and decimated, and finally disappeared. Ezra-Seaman drew attention to the fact that while in two hundred and fifty years only some hundred thousand Indians were partly licked into shape and civilised by the English, twelve millions of aborigines were in the same time raised by Catholic Spain to a far higher degree of civilisation. The same inability to comprehend the inferior race, to stoop towards them so as to raise them up and place them on a level with themselves, is strikingly apparent in all the lamentable history of Ireland, in that of India and in the present administration of Egypt. The English have secured material benefits to these populations: order, security and riches. Their authority in Hindustan, for example, is exercised in all good faith, honestly and justly; but though a century has gone by they still hold among the mass of the natives the position of an isolated company, in that they have no adherents. Foreigners are they still, and a cry of deliverance would salute their departure, even if they took with them well-being and peace. The dominion of the English overwhelms the inferior race; it is oppressive, even deadly, when they cannot appeal, as they would in England, to the initiative and energy of the individual. They do not possess the secret of making their protectorship acceptable, nor can they adapt themselves to the insignificant and weak. They do not represent themselves in their true light, nor do they care to understand any but their peers and their equals.

PART III

THE ENGLISHMAN: MORAL AND SOCIAL

CHAPTER I

THE ENGLISHMAN: ISOLATED AND SUBJECTIVE

1.—*Love, Sympathy, Pride and Sincerity.*

Let us turn our attention from natural environment and race to individual man. To begin with, we perceive a certain hiatus in the English character in place of an essential quality. The Englishman is less social than men of any other nationality; I mean, he is less conscious of the ties that bind humanity together, his moral formation owes little to his relations with other men, he scarcely troubles himself about what they think, and if he ever considers the matter at all, it makes no difference in his sentiments and actions. In short, the Englishman is to a large extent a recluse; he is more aloof from the world in which he lives, and the neighbours whom he elbows, than men of any other nationality. What he experiences in himself is seldom a representation of what he sees with his outward eyes. This is owing no doubt to the essential peculiarity that his imagination is formed mostly from within, by an inward operation which gains from intermittent sensations simply the points of departure and some rapidly transformed rudiments. His character is like a fruit which has grown up under the bark or in a sort of shell: it does not reproduce, like the skin of the peach, every impression that variety of situation and the course of the sun imprints on its alternately pale and reddened exterior. In short, the Englishman is far more of an individual than the Frenchman

or the Italian, for example; and it is in this sense that we must understand the fundamental individualism which is rightly said to be one of the attributes of British genius.

The manner in which the English regard sexual relations is significant. The needs and appetites experienced by the whole of humanity are the basis of these relations. But with the man of the South, these needs are refined, these appetites become more delicate, in consequence of the numerous and vivid impressions which are blended with his whole life, and become by degrees, not only the condition, but a part of all his pleasures. This blending of voluptuousness with natural desires is carried to such an extent that the French, for instance, delay, under the pretext of rendering it more exquisite, the satisfaction of the senses, deferring it so long that it becomes simply the limit, situated in infinity, of a long voyage to the country of the affections: it was this which produced chivalry in the midst of the coarse Middle Ages; it is this which produced the Hôtel de Rambouillet in a more cultured and polite society. The Englishman knows nothing of such things. Chivalry appeared for a moment in England, but proved miserably abortive. *Clélie* and the *Grand Cyrus*, which were the delight of our ancestors, have never been imitated, and apparently are not read now in good society. Voluptuousness in England is not intermingled with the fine impressions, light diversions, and pleasures of conversation which in France make part of it. The Englishman makes straight for the object of his desires. He goes for it as if there were nothing in the world but himself and the object; he enjoys it without making any difficulties.

Let us consider the period when manners were most corrupt in England, viz., from the reign of Charles II. to that of Queen Anne. Under Charles II. the corruption, which in the French Court was cloaked by an appearance of style and a certain air of dignity, appeared simply as abandoned libertinism on the other side of the Strait. *The Memoirs of Grammont*

give us a picture of society tainted with the hypocrisy which is the last homage vice renders to virtue. These memoirs, written in French, at least introduce a little wit into the narration of events of a doubtful character. Under Queen Anne, words were as coarse as deeds. The scenes in novels were often laid in disorderly houses ; prostitutes were the chief characters, filling the air with their slang, and displaying their pantomime unabashed. Under the veneer of cant, things are very much the same to-day. The *Pall Mall Gazette* recently revealed the existence of some obscure haunts where the upper classes secretly indulge in brutality and depravity. English sensuality is merely cloaked by a dull Pharisaism ; in itself it has none of those refinements which would prevent it from descending to bestiality.

The same defect in man in his relations with his fellows is to be found in the inhumanity of which in all ages the English have given examples that can never be forgotten. It bears no sort of resemblance to the artistic cruelty of the Italian and the Spaniard. Their cruelty is that of men who are acutely conscious of the sufferings of others, but the impression, as it reaches them through their nerves, entirely alters its character, and instead of the torments which should arouse sympathy they experience a feeling of joy. The impression that the Englishman receives of the suffering of others is quite the reverse ; to him it is simply a spectacle, he does not feel it reproduced in his own body, and has no occasion to ask himself whether it would be a torture or a pleasure ; his nerves receive no thrill. Lieutenant Jameson, coolly witnessing the sacrifice of a little native girl, and treating the exhibition of anthropophagy as a mere object of curiosity, a noteworthy incident in an interesting journey, is a good example of this condition of the senses and heart. English masters were guilty only of the same incapacity for emotion in the long years during which they tolerated the barbarous treatment endured by women and children in the mines and manufactories. They

knew of and allowed it—inquiries leave us no doubt under this head. Their consciences did not force them to speak, nor, indeed, warn them, for such warning could only be received by those who suffered sympathetically at the sight or narration of sorrow and misery. How many facts we could adduce to prove that the Englishman is more or less isolated from the world through which he travels, cut off by the defectiveness of his senses from the greater number of the impressions which come to us from external things, exempt from the weaknesses to which those impressions render us liable, and able and free to form a definite opinion by more abstract reasoning, in which flesh and blood have no part! For though he may have none of the sensibility which is affected by particular cases, he possesses the sentimentality which is aroused by general questions, and, his passion for action urging him on, he becomes capable of great acts of philanthropy, such as the suppression of the slave trade and the abolition of slavery, which it is vain to try to represent as purely utilitarian actions. From such instances as these we obtain a fair idea of the Englishman's defective sociability ; by temperament he is solitary, and through indifference, independent.

In everyday life inhumanity becomes coarseness and brutality. Fortescue relates how in his time the Englishman did not hesitate to take by force the property of others which he coveted ; he held that to do so was to act as becomes a man : in his eyes it was simply a very laudable trait. Is it not remarkable that he put himself quite naturally into the place of the robber, not in that of the robbed ? The Englishman always conceives himself as a man of action ; in every age he has been the man represented by Hobbes. We can find proofs of this in every century. I will merely recall how some years ago the *Daily News* declared that the Englishman of the lower classes did not know how to amuse himself except in coarse and brutal fashion. What forces, moral or social, can control such savage energies ? The written law is merely a

method of general restraint, *i.e.*, commonplace restraint; the policy of a government is merely a method of human restraint, usually arbitrary; both are external methods, and the abrupt outbreak of energies, that it is desired to restrain, will very rapidly carry away the inadequate barrier which keeps them within bounds. The only bonds sufficiently resistant to restrain such energies are those which each man laboriously fashions out of his own moral substance and imposes upon himself. If a society composed of such elements does not dissolve, it is because it has drawn a principle of order and pacification from this inner source. On one side we see political liberty; on the other the voluntary servitude of faith—self-government outwardly, self-control inwardly. The race is religious, for the simple reason that, being by nature violent and brutal, it has special need of discipline. The force of their temperament and the sort of physical and moral pride which causes them to chafe under the restraint of human authority, induces them to include a similar discipline in their conception of the Divine world, and there, and there only, to suffer it gladly.

It may cause surprise that a race which possesses the pride of life in such a degree should seek refuge in a religion of humility, the first step in which casts the believer, a suppliant, at the feet of Jesus. The fundamental principle of Christianity, and especially of Protestant Christianity, is that all force comes from grace to impotent human liberty; but we must not believe that a Protestant, after his voluntary abasement, finds no means of raising himself up and standing erect; he does not know that craving weakness which continually applies to the Creator, again becoming conscious of its infirmity directly the memory of the transient help has faded away. The weakness of the Englishman is acknowledged once and for all, then he forms an alliance with the Almighty, and ever after is filled with His strength. Grace is in his heart and never leaves it; to this everything he does bears witness.

Is a final proof required of the incompleteness of the English-

man considered socially, signifying that there is a lack of impressions from the outside world, which, in our own opinion, would complete him? I will confine myself to a single example. A young man and girl are walking together in a garden. Suddenly the young girl becomes conscious that her companion is going to make her a proposal of marriage which she might accept. What would be the sentiments and attitude of a Frenchwoman surprised by such an unexpected declaration? We can hardly doubt that the thoughts which would agitate her would result from her method of imagining the impressions and judgment of a certain number of young men and women present at the interview: she sees them quietly exchange an opinion which she divines, disapproving the manner or admiring the propriety of the responses which her scanty disconcerted experience improvises; the next instant she imagines she has taken refuge with her parents and listens, blushing and with lowered eyes, to the prudent words uttered by the maternal voice. Even her timidity is nothing but the result of the cruel uncertainty she feels, while vainly endeavouring to find a method of response which shall conform to the conventions and not excite the contemptuous smiles of the imaginary public she supposes present at the interview. In short, the sentiments of the French girl are derived entirely from her outward circumstances. With the ideal English girl matters are reversed. Margaret Hall, at the first words of her interlocutor, experiences, it is true, a desire to escape from him, and to feel herself under the protection of her father or her mother; but this is momentary: almost immediately her pride reasserts itself; she is conscious of ability to resolve the present difficulty herself. Yes, she knows what to reply, her answer will be a fitting one, and a sentiment of modern pride, "the consciousness of her high dignity as a young girl," rises in her heart, and brimming over inspires the words which the trembling lips pronounce. No support nor counsel are at hand, because she does not need them.

Margaret rejects her lover in words which seem to us almost cruel, and neither her mother nor her father will ever divine the struggle from which she has just emerged. This is the little inner drama on which Mrs. Gaskell counted to excite the interest of the English public. It has no connection with the outer world; the whole thing takes place in the inner consciousness. Margaret does not even dream of alluding to it afterwards in conversation with a friend. The ordeal is enveloped in perpetual silence. This is a good example of the victory of the individual over the conventional being, of the spontaneity of a proud heart over artificial forms. The whole conduct of Margaret is profoundly individual, because it is profoundly subjective; there is no suspicion, however small, of social obligations. The solitary being, which every Englishman is in his heart, is here presented with force and distinctness.

Thus we begin to form a picture in our minds of this individual: on the one hand, sensual, brutal, inhuman; on the other, capable of concentrating his forces and constraining his pride in such a way as to give admirable examples of nobility. To complete this first picture I need only bring forward his sincerity. With us, the principal obstacle encountered by sincerity is the knowledge we have of the effect it will produce on other men and of the wounds their vanity will receive from it. The Englishman is not hindered by anything of the kind: he does not appreciate the impression his words produce; he has only a vague and fleeting feeling with regard to it, a feeling which is the less likely to assume precision and permanence the thicker the skin of his interlocutors, and the less vulnerable their sensibility. This is the first cause of English sincerity. It is another illustration of the relative incapacity of these people to picture to themselves the emotions of others: an incapacity which causes the individual to court isolation and shun his fellows, even while dwelling

in their midst. However that may be, this race can furnish the largest number of examples of a sincerity which is sometimes noble to sublimity, sometimes intimate to friendliness, sometimes brutal to rudeness. The English consider it the evidence of a strong will, which is unfettered by a desire to please, and makes little account of offending others, provided it can thereby the more directly attain its end.

In October, 1885, an official banquet was held at Crewe. His Worship the Mayor, an ex-mechanic, proposed a toast to "The Queen" without further beating about the bush, praising her as a good mother and a good wife. That was all. Of the then Prince of Wales he said, that he had closely followed his progress, and was happy to say that there had been progress; at a certain period he had not had a very high opinion of the Prince: believing that he cared more for his pleasures, and even what might be termed his vices, than for the duties of his high position. But he was heartily glad to think that in proportion as the Prince advanced in years he grew wiser and showed signs of improvement. He believed he might now be considered the worthy son of a worthy father and mother, and he felt confident he would worthily occupy the throne to which he was destined; therefore he proposed his health. The same manly and fraternal frankness was apparent in the toast to the Mayor proposed by one of the aldermen, who said he would not flatter his Worship; he would not know how to, and it would not please him. His administration as Mayor was the best evidence in his favour. The fact that he had twice been elected showed the esteem in which he was held by his colleagues. Naturally they had their disagreements. His Worship had often been at variance with them, and sometimes said things which hurt; but he had always done what he considered right without any respect of persons, and never allowed differences of opinion to influence his private relations. His Worship was a gentleman it took time to know; he was not an expansive sort of man, but those who did get to know him deeply respected him.

Thus true men speak to one another. Those I have mentioned possessed civil courage in the highest degree, and were thereby enabled to make those they lived among fear, esteem and respect them. They lacked a certain delicacy, but they had the healthy rudeness and noble freedom of behaviour and language which distinguishes the citizen. It is said that in 1864, when John Stuart Mill was a candidate for Westminster, one of the bystanders put a question to him with the evident intention of embarrassing him: Was it true he had said that English working men were addicted to lying? The audience was chiefly composed of the working classes; but they were no more accustomed to listen to adroit flatteries than Mill to utter them. He did not hesitate for a moment; "Yes, I said it," he replied. It is not difficult to imagine the clamours and protestations with which such a reply would be received by a French audience. In London tumultuous applause drowned the voice of the speaker. Is it credible that so offensive an accusation could please English working men, even if they deemed it merited? No, indubitably; what made them enthusiastic was the simple moral courage with which Mill was beforehand with their displeasure. The subtle explanations into which a Frenchman would have undoubtedly plunged would have neither contented nor pleased them. Their robust candour required rougher fare. For such a nation there is less danger than for others in giving itself over to democracy; it may at times be the dupe, but never the accomplice, of a demagogue. The multitude, like other multitudes, will go astray; it will allow itself to be hurried along; but the day must come when, addressed by some great citizen, it will admiringly receive his rough and downright words, forsaking for him the beguilers of a day.

2.—*Unsociability.*

The almost impenetrable reserve of the English, and what might be called their taciturnity, are not without important

consequences. A great thinker of the last century contrasted the nations who talk with those who do not talk. The degree of sociability of any race, the more or less imperious need they have to see their fellows, associate with them, exchange ideas with them, receive their sympathy, and give their own in return, partly determines their destinies. The Englishman feels no weariness in living alone, no desire to tell his affairs to others, nor to hear about theirs. Apart from what touches him directly, he interests himself solely in public matters which affect him indirectly in his character of citizen. "Every one of these islanders," said Emerson, "is an island himself. . . . In a company of strangers you would think him deaf; . . . he does not give you his hand. He does not let you meet his eye. . . . At the hotel he is hardly willing to whisper it (his name) to the clerk at the book office." "The Frenchman cannot make friends in England," Montesquieu remarks, adding, "How can the English love foreigners? They do not love one another. How can they give us dinners? They do not dine amongst themselves. We must do as they do, take no heed of others, neither love any one nor count upon any one. . . . The Englishman wants a good dinner, a woman and the comforts of life; and as these things limit his desires, and he does not care for society, when he loses his fortune and can no longer obtain them, he either kills himself or becomes a thief."[1] A hundred and fifty years after Montesquieu, Mill, in much the same way, contrasted French sociability and good humour with the distrust and egoism of his compatriots. "Everybody acts," he said, "as if everybody else were an enemy or a bore." It is a more than singular fact that in all the years they passed together in the House of Commons, Lord John Russell had no personal relations with Sir Robert Peel. He gives evidence of this in one of his Essays. This attitude

[1] "A tiler," he says again, "takes his newspaper on the roof to read." A Frenchman would soon come down to talk politics with his comrades.

towards their fellows is due in part to timidity, mingled with a certain coldness of temperament and some aridity of heart.

In short, the English unite for action, and keep company with one another the better to combine their forces and the more surely to attain a certain end; they do not assemble for the purpose of talking or to pass the time agreeably in conversation. They leave the Frenchman to sacrifice to this superfluity, which in his eyes forms the charm and prize of life, more actual and necessary advantages.

The effects of such a disposition are considerable. Volney regarded it as the reason of Englishmen's success in agriculture, commerce, and industry. Their silence, he said, enables them to concentrate their ideas, and gives them leisure to work them out and to make exact calculations of their expenses and returns; they acquire a greater clearness in thought, and consequently in expression, which results in a greater precision and assurance in their whole system of conduct, both public and private. This observer attributes to the same cause the unequal fortunes of the English and French colonies in the United States. "The French colonist," he said, "takes counsel with his wife as to what he shall do; he asks her opinion, and it would be a miracle if they always agreed. The wife comments, criticises, disputes; the husband persists or gives in, becomes angry or disheartened: sometimes the house becomes intolerable to him, he takes his gun and goes out shooting or travelling, or to talk with his neighbours; sometimes he stays at home and spends his time in good-humoured conversation, or in quarrelling and fault-finding." "To visit his neighbours," he says again, "is so imperious an habitual necessity to the Frenchman that we cannot find a single instance of a colonist belonging to our nation settling out of hearing and sight of others, on any of the borders of Louisiana and Canada. In several places, when I asked at what distance the most remote colonist had

settled : they answered, "He is in the desert with the bears, a league from any habitation, and has no one to talk to." The slow and taciturn American colonist (read English) passes the whole day in an uninterrupted succession of useful work ; after breakfast he frigidly gives orders to his wife, who receives them with timidity and coldness and executes them without comment. If the weather is fine he goes out and works, cuts down trees and makes fences ; if the weather is bad he makes an inventory of the house, the barn, and the stables, mends the doors and makes chairs. If he has an opportunity he will sell his farm and go into the woods ten or twenty leagues from the frontier, and there make for himself a new habitation.

Carlyle, who apparently had not read Volney, sums up what he says in one sentence : "The English are a dumb people," and admirably expounds this saying by adding that silence places them in touch and harmony with what the tongue does not express—"a congruity with the unuttered." I do not believe any thinker has described the English character with greater justice.

With colonisation we have entered the economic sphere, and here the characteristics of the race have other and very remarkable effects. It may cause astonishment that a people so independent of social relations should be unusually addicted to the formation of societies. The reason of this is that to assemble for the purpose of aimless conversation and to unite for the purpose of obtaining a certain result are two very different, and, in a sense, opposite things. The man who rejoices in putting forth his strength experiences a tranquil and complete pleasure in feeling himself part of a powerful collective agency. Others, more indolent, in order to obtain due satisfaction from an activity which costs them something, must set it by itself, throw it into relief, and glorify it in itself and for itself alone. To the former this reward is superfluous ; he can do without it. To an obscure workman the knowledge that he adequately fulfils his allotted task is sufficient to make him

happy. Vanity, which finds him already satisfied, has but little hold over him. This accounts for the readiness with which the Englishman assumes an *incognito* for some social reason. The newspapers, for example, have always remained faithful to the custom of unsigned articles. This custom could never become the rule in our country, because the Frenchman does not really love action for its own sake; the velocity acquired by a collective entity of which he is part seldom carries him off his feet and sweeps him irresistibly along. He can always extricate himself, and, reassuming his identity at will, easily forfeit his anonymity. In England, when a man has once surrendered his identity, it never occurs to him to withdraw from the contract. The English, though profoundly individual, are nevertheless peculiarly qualified for collective operations; they have a superior power of coalition and ability to work collectively which is unknown among races who are less active and more absurdly vain.

3.—*The Spirit of Adventure and the Spirit of Self-Preservation.*

In England, the spirit of adventure always proceeds from the same source, and from this source it derives its character. The love of novelty and desire for the unknown have one hindrance—the Englishman is always English and leads a thoroughly English life wherever he goes. The main fact and distinctive trait of his spirit of adventure, the turning-point, so to speak, is that the prospective risks involved discourage him less easily than the Frenchman or the Italian, for instance. To the prudent man, all risks resolve themselves into prospective superfluous anxieties, and efforts towards anticipating or counterbalancing them. The individual who does not fear trouble takes his share in these chances lightly. Love of repose does not make him exaggerate the attraction and value of security. The surplus energy and disposable force he feels

conscious of possessing, engender a sort of optimism which, in his imagination, diminishes the probability of misfortune and relegates to eternity the moment when he expects to encounter weariness. The manners and customs of the English bear continual evidence of this disposition of mind. The young man bravely marries the undowered woman; he does not hesitate to double or treble his burdens at the commencement of life. The manufacturer essays a new process with a confidence and expenditure of capital which startle us. He knows that he will have recuperated himself before another improvement intervenes and puts his on the shelf. The emigrant embarks with a tiny hoard which his laborious obstinacy will force to yield a hundred per cent.

Besides this first cause there is a second, which I have already pointed out, viz., the passion—I was going to say the mania—for action and movement, the unreasoning desire of effort for the sake of effort. In the very depths of his being this great mainspring of the Englishman's activity is at a tension. It begins as a wholly physical need, in some degree a muscular one; the impetus of the nerves is not required to call it abruptly into activity nor cause it to relax; it assumes the initiative in this homogeneous and single soul, which is neither enriched nor diversified by visible impressions from the outer world; which is essentially inflexible, not composed of mobile elements, capable of resisting the general impulsion they receive. The necessity for action is a force which overrules every inclination. We cannot help noting that the majority of the English employ a sustained activity in directions already known and sanctioned by custom; they keep to the old highway along which they have travelled for centuries; they do not favour by-paths. Only a feeble minority undertake the modification of arrangements handed down by tradition, and they do not attempt more than one point at a time; on this they expend all their force, allowing their name to be attached to it and refusing to be seduced by

the idea of wider and more fruitful fields for their energy ; they invariably remain faithful to their crotchet. Until his last hour Mr. Plimsoll was the representative and supporter of the navy *versus* the merchant service ; from year to year Sir Wilfrid Lawson indefatigably renews his Local Option Bill ; each devoted himself to one question. In France, these circumscribed and persevering activities are unknown ; they would not be estimated at their proper value. With our neighbours, men who employ their whole lives in this way are looked upon as honourable and well employed.

The missionaries deliberately choose a distant sphere of work, ignoring other spheres also under the eye of God. They yield themselves up wholly to their daily task, obtaining from it personal satisfactions which do not require the enhancement of pleasing surroundings. Further, it is by no means apparent that they have journeyed to the very horizon in the search for and contemplation of an ideal purpose, capable of raising them above their earthly work. "It is part of the day's work ; it comes in the day's work." This thoroughly English expression is what we hear from the kind of man who examines his conscience every evening, regulates his accounts with his God, and goes to sleep completely satisfied. He is not possessed by the despairing idea of a remote object which must be attained or a good work he has not time to accomplish. It is the day's work ; night and sleep limit both his desires and his efforts.

The reason of this difference between the two nations is apparent. With us, the incentive and stimulus of the necessity for action are not only the greatness and force of this necessity, but come from a higher and more remote source ; the spirit itself gives the impulsion, and with a power and variety which is in proportion to its own fulness and richness of life, concealing more than one contradiction. Moreover, the principle from which it proceeds is often an abstract idea, which raises several questions at the same time and on which depends the

solution of more than one problem. The mind also is more prone to change its designs and discontinue its efforts. The speculative spirit of the thinker and the searcher carries him rapidly from one novelty to another and multiplies the points at which it deviates from tradition. In England, the thinker and the searcher have little occasion to intervene; they appear for a moment at the appeal of the necessity for action by which every individual is possessed; they point out, if need be, a question, one only, which seems to them worthy of a persistent effort; then, having put in motion an activity which is sufficient in itself and needs no further assistance from them, they re-enter their silence and semi-slumber. This is the reason why England can number so many original characters, and not one revolutionary spirit. The original character is one which has thrown off the shackles of a given law, yet recognises the authority of every other law; at one point it is emancipated, but only to be more servilely submissive to tradition in general; it is always the upholder of the *statu quo*. The revolutionary spirit is exactly the reverse of the original character; it is a partisan of all, or nearly all, novelties; to it, rightly or wrongly, they seem linked together and mutually sustained; religion, literature, and politics it always seeks to reform; it is a spirit, and therefore mobile and subtle; from one problem it passes to another, embracing them all in a somewhat superficial survey. Intelligences of this stamp are naturally rare in England. The genius of a Saint-Simon could not have expanded on the other side of the Channel; what chance of developing would it have had in a country where Mill himself felt obliged to use circumspection and euphemisms? Persons like Blanqui and Barbès could not have adopted in England the attitude which characterised them in France; instead of the sympathy and respect they encountered among certain of the public they would only have excited universal repugnance and contempt.

This is the reason why England has the reputation of being a country of tradition, averse even to the most necessary

changes. To three-quarters of the population the idea of introducing a modification into any of the laws or customs does not occur; they are creatures of habit in the highest degree. At particular points the other quarter admit innovations, which, however, cover a very limited field; they devote themselves to these innovations, pursuing them with ardour; but on all other points they are as sheeplike as the rest of the nation. It was therefore with justice that Carlyle cried out: "Bull is a born Conservative. . . . All great peoples are conservative, slow to believe in novelties, patient of much error in actualities, deeply and for ever certain of the greatness that is in law, in custom, once solemnly established and now long recognised as just and final."

The English people has had to do violence to itself in order to achieve the greater part of that material progress by which it now profits with its customary practical superiority. It began by regarding with contempt, anxiety, and sometimes even horror, the most innocent and useful discoveries: the use of steam by Arkwright and the submarine telegraph, the Suez Canal and the Universal Exhibition, the postal reform and the Channel tunnel. With greater reason organic reforms in the Government have always been treated as *views* and *dangerous experiments* for quite a long time. In the same way "cant," that sort of hypocrisy peculiar to the English, sets new philosophical theories aside without discussion.

It may appear extraordinary that a race which possesses in so large a measure the passion for liberty, courage, and initiative, which has little scruple in altering its conception of heaven and adventures boldly into the unknown, should profess so much respect for the past and cling to a superstitious continuance of its ancient customs. The antinomy is only superficial, and arises from the fact that an inclination towards action and movement is easily confounded with an inclination towards novelty. It is the passive characters

who require novelty. Stationary themselves, they want a world of animation around them, a continually changing scene which, without effort on their part, maintains the interest of life; theories and actualities which create as by magic the true and the good, without demanding from them a tithe of patient labour. On the other hand, those for whom concentrated and continued effort is the supreme joy, seek in it alone efficiency and success; they are inclined to the belief that there is little difference in the virtue and usefulness of one mechanism and another, independently of the impulse and direction they receive from man. Moreover, they instinctively desire that the ideas and actualities which give the impetus and direction to their activity should change no more than is indispensable, in order that the movement they produce should not be hindered nor weakened, but follow the precise course they have marked out for it. Finally, what force can counterbalance that of custom and foreknowledge when great generalisations do not intoxicate, nor the mirage of system exercise a supreme seduction? What dissolvent other than that of abstract principles is capable of disaggregating such hard basalts? It is precisely because the race is active and energetic that it remains so faithfully attached to its traditional institutions.

PART IV

THE ENGLISHMAN AS POLITICIAN

CHAPTER I

THE CITIZEN

1.—*Liberty and the Revolutionary Spirit.*

At a first glance we do not receive the impression that the English nation is easy to govern. The muscular vigour of the race—their taste for violent exercise, such as boxing; for cruel amusements, such as cock-fighting and, in former times, bull-fights—and their habits of intemperance, are not reassuring conditions: they do not promise much breathing time for authority. There is no medium in England between the domestic hearth and the exchange or the forum. The desire for ideas simply as ideas has not sufficient strength to make men seek each other's society in order to talk; the desire for action for its own sake is the one thing capable of bringing them together. Social life is therefore summed up in industrial, commercial, and, more especially, political life. Now political life in England is characterised by violent and incessant agitation. In one week an observer can witness in London numerous electoral meetings, when the crowd expend their breath in hurrahing and chaff, corporation meetings, banquets with toasts and acclamations, gigantic processions of petitioners with banners, and noisy, enthusiastic receptions of any illustrious foreigner. To these might have been added not long ago the tumult of the hustings, with its flights of sarcasm and showers of bad eggs and mud falling on the candidates. Regarded at close

quarters, all this is not very alarming. In such agitations the blind and absolutely physical emotion is greatly in excess of the passionate or deliberate. The Englishman's first instinct is to exercise his members and use his lungs, and this he does lustily for the benefit of the person or question which circumstances, tradition, and custom point out to him. Three-quarters of his enthusiasm is simply a species of sport; grave conviction and deep feeling make up the remaining quarter. Foreign refugees such as Orsini, and, before him, Kossuth, who took seriously their prodigious success as popular orators, and believed in a movement of public opinion in favour of their political dreams, were singularly deceived in the event. They only stirred up the animal spirits of the crowd; fundamentally, their cause was a matter of indifference to the people. What the populace cheered was the man of action, not his cause. Moreover, it gave them the pleasure of gulping down air and emptying their lungs, and warming themselves by clapping their hands and stamping their feet.

We touch here on one of the reasons why liberty of combination and assemblage is regarded as innocuous in England, and even included among guarantees of order and methods of pacification. It is too great a risk to entrust guns to people eager to load with shot, and have something definite at which to aim; but there is sensibly less risk with those who find almost as much pleasure in shooting with powder and in the air. An Englishman, on the return of a fruitless political procession, does not experience, like the Frenchman, a fever of disappointment and redoubling of excitement; on the contrary, he feels a sense of cessation, of peace and contentment. This is because the procession has really attained its end, in that it has given him the opportunity of expending his superfluous physical energy. Liberty of assemblage therefore, acts as a regulator rather than a basin in which the force of the current is concentrated: it resembles a canal for the reception and discharge of water, which moderates the

effect of the rising flood, and allows only a harmless stream to flow between the banks.

This is the reason why the suppression of the hustings was one of the most remarkable steps in the direction of universal suffrage and democracy. The law of 1872 attacked what seemed to be only a farce in the worst of taste ; but this farce of a day, during which the crowd satisfied to repletion its brutal appetite for power, shrouded the real act of sovereignty, to all appearance mean and insignificant, in a veil of dust, noise and intoxication, which prevented their attaching due value to it, and grudging the ballot to the freehold electors. The system of secret voting, while it deprived the people of their few hours of power during which they exhausted their superfluous bestiality, also unwisely took away from them that participation which rendered them less sensible to, and that compensation which softened, the bitter sentiment of inequality and exclusion of which they were conscious. The levelling of electoral franchise of necessity followed close on so imprudent a measure.

It is a peculiarity of the English that the communication between the organs of contemplation and action is naturally imperfect. The impressions received from the outside world are reproduced in the nerves and brain of this people with less rapidity and certainty than is the case with other nations ; and the effect of such impressions, like that of the ideas themselves, is more tardily felt in the mechanism set in motion by the will. The impulses of an Englishman either remain dormant or do not move him to action until a long time afterwards. The ease with which duelling was discouraged, not only among civilians but also in the army, is a good illustration of this native passiveness. The anger provoked by an outrage flares up less rapidly in England than elsewhere. This is the reason why, in a country where the classes which work and suffer have the right of assembling in almost unlimited numbers, there is yet no disorder which a policeman cannot control. But we must

not be deceived; this passiveness has nothing in common with the inertia which, with other races, proceeds from want of tone and energy in the operation of the will. In England, it simply renders the will stronger and more efficient because it is freer to pursue with steadfastness the object it has in view. No fleeting incident goads or distracts it; no lateral attraction turns it from the straight line. It is like a spring which works with perfect regularity between the thick cushions of an insensibility which deadens shocks from the outer world. We must therefore, realise, that passiveness of this nature is an aid to the police, but it certainly does not contribute to political authority, nor does it lighten the task of government. The populace is generally more amenable in England than elsewhere; it is not so liable to outbursts of anger; but this does not mean that the nation is more manageable and easily satisfied on subjects which it has most at heart. The fact that rioting is infrequent is no guarantee against political agitation nor even revolution. The people who quietly disperse at the sight of a constable, are as rock to statesmen who try to move them when they have made up their minds on any given point; particularly is this the case with that obstinate demand of theirs for a free field for demonstration, protest, and struggle. Serenely they use their right to assemble and combine, and whoever essays to deprive them of it will immediately become conscious of the depths of vehement passion and tenacity which this serenity conceals.

I will now proceed to demonstrate that the political franchises of England are conquests which have adroitly been made to pass as an immemorial heritage. The Declaration of 1688, which refused the King power to maintain troops without special permission, claimed for English subjects the right to carry arms. This is nothing less than the right of rebellion with power to make reservations and demand guarantees. This right has never been explicitly proclaimed, but although seldom mentioned, it is none the less an element

of the Constitution, a basis for other rights. It might best be likened to a reserve battalion, which, though separated from the main force and placed a little in the rear, is yet within range of voice and command. In more recent years this right was referred to in a speech by no less an orator than Gladstone. The President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Chamberlain, was accused in the House of Commons of having alluded to, and more or less provoked, in an extra-parliamentary harangue, a descent of the inhabitants of Birmingham on the Palace of Westminster. The Prime Minister took up the defence of his colleague, saying, that though it might be well to bid the people love order and hate violence, that was not the only thing necessary. Certainly, he said, he was averse to the employment of force, but he could not, and would not, adopt those forms of effeminate language by which the consoling fact was concealed from the nation, that they might find encouragement in the thought of their previous struggles, the recollection of the great attainments of their ancestors, and the consciousness that these attainments were still theirs.

2.—*Inequality of Conditions.*

Activity without interruption or limit, and competition without truce or pity, for ten centuries these have been the most obvious characteristics of economic England. The natural consequence of activity without interruption or limit is an enormous accumulation of capital. The natural consequence of competition without truce or pity is a very unequal distribution of these immense riches. In England the feeble, the infirm, the timid and the idle are lost. Just as in a crowd which presses on towards a goal: whoever once gets the start is swept forward and carried to the end of the course; whoever slackens is soon outstripped and forced far back by the eddies of the human wave; whoever misses a step is knocked over, trampled under foot and forgotten. This

occurs so frequently that Society has been compelled to assume the duty of picking up and setting aside those who are injured and mutilated in the feverish struggle; and hence the laws relating to the poor. The indigent are picked up, put away in decent houses, and no longer in evidence. In these asylums generations silently pass away. In no other country does humanity present the spectacle of a harder "struggle for life," of a more merciless selection. It is noticeable that in England the climate is on the side of the strong. The individual and the species in this latitude and these fogs cannot be preserved without abundant nourishment, precautions and a hygiene which infers a certain degree of wealth. Whoever falls below this degree decays, degenerates, and eventually perishes. Careful observers who know England can remember, and to a certain extent have still before their eyes, the striking results of this unbroken selection. They have all noticed the two races, if I may so designate them, who, at a first glance, are characterised by two physical types as different as the greyhound and the bull-dog, with whom they have more than one trait in common. The one, slender, vigorous, agile, with fresh colouring and animated physiognomy; the other, cadaverous, with leaden eyes and concentrated, or rather sunk, in himself; the first maintained with infinite care, thanks to an abundant and wholesome diet, continuous exercise and habits of decorum and restraint; the second, deformed, wasted and ruined in less than a generation by insufficient nourishment, and the abuse of strong liquors, unrelaxing labour and insufficient recreation, and finally and chiefly by self-abandonment and a sort of callous indifference, which are vices common to all the wretched, and allow man to succumb without an effort to the destructive operation of natural causes.

Further, riches have been elevated into a quasi virtue whilst poverty is considered a vice and disgrace. This is because riches are the reward of that effort and industry which are regarded in England as the sovereign good, and moreover they

form an indispensable environment if man is to preserve the integrity of his person and faculties. Again, poverty is the sign of a thing particularly to be detested, viz., idleness; and it is but a short journey from indolence, which does not take life seriously, to the degradation of the human being. This moral consideration joins the harshness of a conscientious judgment to the natural passiveness of the British race when forced into an acknowledgment of the injustice of fate. Not only are favourites of fortune lacking in feeling, but they generally condemn the unfortunate and those who have incurred what is often unmerited disgrace; they more frequently feel inclined to profit by than ameliorate it, and they only suggest a remedy with obvious contempt to those who have failed in life. Nothing can exceed the brutal insensibility of the conduct of those English masters, which was brought to light by agricultural and industrial inquiries, during the earlier part of the last century. We recognise in it not only a certain native slowness in receiving impressions, but also the absorbed indifference of the man of action, too occupied with his aims to be attentive to those ills of others of which he is the cause. It is like the half irresponsible callousness of the hurried traveller who crushes an ant-heap rather than hinder himself by a step.

In short, the basis of the English character is that produced by the most eager competitions, and deafest and blindest of "struggles for life." Although the development of riches has sensibly diminished the violence of the struggle, and allowed the augmentation of the gratuitous part of advantages, at the same time as the protection assured to the feeble a marked inequality in conditions is none the less apparent, so to speak, in the force of things, and equality, if an effort is made to re-establish it, continuously tends towards its own destruction.

It is a paradox confirmed by facts that any excess there may be in the inequality between the classes creates a condition by

which the evil may be more patiently supported by those who endure it. Below a certain degree of degradation and misery, man loses hope, will, and even the idea of improving his condition; he becomes a prey to the stupefying intoxication of misfortune and falls into a sort of insensibility. The life which is in him becomes purely mechanical; he imagines and desires nothing but what he is, for what is, is fated to be, and this to an obtuse intelligence is confounded with what ought to be. When the inequality is sufficiently accentuated to be a source of suffering, and yet is not too great to remove all hope of banishing it, then only does it provoke jealousy and resistance. This has been the case in France. Tocqueville made the profound observation that the Revolution burst forth there and not elsewhere, because France was the country where the lower classes had made the most progress in ease and comfort. They could form a better idea of what they still lacked; they could more easily imagine a condition in which what was lacking would be bestowed on them. Moreover, they experienced an ill the cure of which appeared to them easy.

The majority of the working classes in England, and especially the intelligent few who march at their head, are at present in much the same case; they have passed the limit beyond which suffering is wholly conscious, reaction against the evil determined and deliberate, and the means employed sure and effective. The perfected organisation of the trade unions betrays a people who know the value of their rights and have made an art of employing them.

The fact that England is a northern country indubitably adds to the reasonableness of these demands and aggravates their danger. In the South, man has but few wants, subsists on little and lives out of doors; the magnificence with which Nature freely surrounds him is the source of an enjoyment far more intense than that derived from the costly luxury and laboured comfort of human habitations. That which the rich have more than the poor becomes in such case a futile super-

fluity, of which the poor take no heed. In a country like England, where riches are an essential condition of happiness, the social hierarchy which sanctions and perpetuates unequal distribution must weigh heavily on those whom it does not favour. How can those classes who have the lesser portion avoid continually comparing themselves with others? How can they possess the faculty of not being acutely conscious of the inferiority of their lot and of supporting the partial distribution with equanimity?

A people like the English, who find their chief source of enjoyment in action, are secure to a certain extent from this feeling of discontent. Personal contentment, the sort of *growth of being* which the man who acts vigorously experiences in himself, has nothing whatever to do with differences of condition and fortune; it is an entirely subjective enjoyment, measurable solely by the intensity and efficacy of the effort accomplished. It is equally complete and acute whatever the object of the effort, and as varied in its nature as are external circumstances. Here, then, is to be found a prime fund of happiness within the reach of every one, a first dividend for all, which, to a certain extent, softens the bitterness of the feeling of the injustice of this world. However mediocre the position of an Englishman in Society, however humble his profession, the mere fact that he has a profound consciousness of the individual pleasure attached to effort, renders him in a sense the equal of princes, and inferior to none.

It is perfectly obvious why the men of the English working classes have hitherto evinced little desire to change the aristocratic constitution of society; they have a secret compensation which is not to be found amongst those of their own standing in other countries. In the social hierarchy they are conscious of a fair division of labour rather than of an unjust distribution of enjoyment. They are occupied in proportioning the extent of their effort rather than in comparing their lot with that of others, or if they do indeed take themselves as a

subject for comparison, it is with their fellows in the same class, and the parallel bears on the energy and success of each individual's activity. In England, many lives which are very humble, narrow, laborious, and made up, to all appearance, of a succession of futile efforts and mediocrity, would, if closely analysed, be found to yield a satisfaction as full, and a felicity as complete, as that of the titled heir to one of the great English fortunes. George Eliot reproduced this type with an indelible pencil in the person of Tom Tulliver. The desire for action and effort places this happiness within the reach of each individual, and renders it inaccessible to none. It will be impossible to comprehend the singular mansuetude and endurance on the part of the poorer classes unless we free ourselves from the accepted ideas regarding the practical turn of mind and utilitarianism of the race, and recognise that there is in their hearts, subduing bitter and trivial impulses, an inward source of contentment and a relative indifference to social inequalities.

There is another reason why the English have less difficulty than, for instance, the French, in accommodating themselves to a political system founded on privilege. This tolerant disposition may be traced to several causes. The English people are naturally unmannerly and uncouth; they have no instinctive knowledge of the rules of polite society, and to make them conform to it they need a long course of discipline, and the hereditary accumulation of impressions, which gradually, as generations go by, assume the ascendancy, and effect a change of conditions. The slight stiffness and self-consciousness in the irreproachable correctness of the English upper classes betrays how arduous has been the victory of art and will over nature. The original defects of a people do not always provoke consequences which, added to their causes, magnify the defects and render them fatal to society. By the force of reaction an opposite ideal is frequently created which, in the case of a select few, corrects or tempers these defects, and engenders certain particularly exquisite specimens of

qualities denied to the masses. It is because the Englishman is not naturally a gentleman that there is in England a class of gentlemen. These creations generally bear traces of the effort which produced them. Hence a natural consequence: the men of the lower classes feel the vast difference between themselves and these products of art, education and heredity; the gulf to be bridged over between them is too great, they are too keenly conscious of the disadvantages under which they labour, to have any ambition to ascend to the plane of the upper classes, besides whose ease their awkwardness would be painfully apparent.

Now in France—especially in the South—and in Italy, the small peasants and artisans, with their quick minds and supple natures, easily adopt the tone of any society into which they may chance to be thrown. Poets and orators from birth, they even occasionally possess a grand air and grace of manner; they believe themselves to be immediately, and indeed are, on a level with our educated men. Lack of instruction and education vainly retards their progress; the gifts of nature make up the deficiency, and enable them to retrieve at least half what they have lost. A few months of intercourse with educated people does the rest. Such men are ready made and fully equipped rivals of our upper classes, and it is easy to understand they impatiently support social inequalities. They feel themselves at the very first equal to any one. English artisans, with their solid qualities and heavy common sense, are not conscious of any right to such pretensions. The prospect of a seat in Parliament, when they have obtained a majority amongst the electors, rather alarms than tempts them. They themselves at present form by far the greater proportion of the electors; but I doubt if the facility with which they can now become leaders makes them more desirous of obtaining such a position than they used to be. They cannot imagine themselves entering and figuring in such a sphere; they know that too much time would be

required, in fact that the whole of their lives would not suffice to give them the tone of the place, and enable them to comport themselves with that discreet ease, abandonment without vulgarity, and gravity tempered by humour, which the gentleman owes to his education, the consciousness of his rank and the habit of riches. They foresee the cold stare and compressed lips of their future colleagues. The habits of urbanity, which in France so quickly obliterate social distinctions, are unknown to the well-brought-up Englishman. Every man, therefore, keeps to himself, and does not soar above the class to which he belongs ; his sons or grandsons, perhaps, step up a degree and reap the fruits of his industrious moderation. In France, in each generation, the lower classes produce individual and richly endowed men who, at the first onset, enter into competition with the upper classes. They are capable of immediately assuming the position of citizen, deputy, or ordinary minister. In England, the lower classes do not feel capable of equipping their elect for the struggle in less than two or three generations of gradual and gentle ascent. The cause and effect of this are obvious. The cause is that the natures of the English are less supple, their genius slower ; the effect is that the hierarchy and privileges of the various classes are accepted with greater readiness and endured with greater equanimity.

3.—*Tradition and Innovation.*

The same democracy which tolerates the inequalities of an aristocratic system of society has hitherto accepted without remonstrance the dilatoriness and hesitations of an equally balanced government. The system of the two Houses, in particular, has never raised the objections nor excited the dislike it has had to encounter with us. It may appear singular that a nation unusually alive to the wisdom of the axiom, "Time is money," should arrange its affairs on a

system which allows the postponement of a reform, held to be wise and urgent by the popular majority, for several years. This is due to the fact that, in spite of the generally received opinion, the English are not pure utilitarians. In their eyes human activity is more or less an end in itself. The prospect of a practical result adds a stimulus and lends a precise direction to the effort; it is an essential element, but the chief impulse to which man is subject arises from his vivid conception of the joys to be derived from concentrated and combative action. The surmountable obstacles he encounters on his road are therefore not entirely displeasing to him; though they may retard success, yet they force him to concentrate his will, render him more acutely conscious of its vehemence and vigour, and place at its disposal a wider field of action. The man, without over much regret, sees the course of activity lengthen out before him, his one stipulation being that no effort shall be altogether without result, and that every step he takes shall diminish the distance between himself and his goal.

There are others to whom activity, considered in itself, appears as a painful necessity. Far from delighting in it, man is impatient to escape from it by means of success; he hastens to have done with it. In this disposition of mind the desire to attain the end becomes the sole and only impulse, and naturally man is irritated by the feeblest obstacles, and angered by the smallest causes of delay. He will only accept a constitution where everything is hurried forward. This is why the system of one Chamber still finds many partisans in France. Its history is too well known for me to have to dwell upon it now. Hitherto the violent outbursts of anger on the part of the English nation against the House of Lords have only been a method of intimidating and constraining it, and have never betrayed a deep-seated animosity nor permanent incompatibility of temper.

The same opposite tendencies of the two nations are repro-

duced in their legislative procedure, which with us is relatively expeditious, while England has suffered, and even up till 1887 appeared to desire, hers to be slow and dilatory. A crying disproportion must exist between the number of urgent requirements developed by a complicated civilisation and the parliamentary methods of providing for them in due season, in order to force the House of Commons to accept closure and admit, under a still cumbersome and intricate form, the principle of special committees.

I might, moreover, cite the process by which reforms are effected in the two countries. The English make for their goal, indefatigably and unweariedly, by the circuitous route of agitation; articles in the papers, distribution of brochures, meetings, demonstrations in the streets, monster petitions; all the trouble they give themselves is a source of pleasure to them. Mr. Herbert Spencer relates how, on one occasion, on entering the office of an association which had been established for the reform of a certain law, he found every one in a state of perplexity—president, secretaries, and members of the council. The reform had been passed in Parliament. The society was henceforth objectless. It is by no means certain that their dismay was merely the disappointment of the parasite defrauded of the question on which it had counted to live; but there was indubitably mingled with it the disappointment of the industrious man who sees himself shut out of the particular field of activity which he has reserved for himself, and who is consequently compelled to seek elsewhere an outlet for his energy. In France we are supremely conscious of the tedium and irritation of these circumlocutions. One thought alone occupies our mind: how to escape from this gehenna; and with an impatience which is partly due to our intolerance we hurry forward by the short road of revolution.

There have always been, and still are, in the English Parliament men thoroughly serious and respected, who devote themselves to some particular project of reform. From year

to year, impervious to weariness and careless of ridicule, they bring up some little motion, and again and again it is set aside. They do not modify it, and experience no temptation to enlarge its scope. They never weary of it, nor does their interest in it slacken. Some occupy a whole lifetime in this way, considering it well spent. It may be said that they deliberately choose a line of action which, with a minimum of alteration, necessitates a maximum of activity. It might also be said that their intention is not so much to convince people by the force and profundity of their reasoning as to familiarise them by repetition with the proposed measure, creating for it a sort of past amongst the subjects which have alternately occupied the public mind, and thereby diminishing the kind of discredit which is attached to a too recent novelty. We should find in France neither assiduous orators nor patient auditors for reforms thus presented. This state of things is peculiar to England.

Other less narrow innovations have been silently introduced into the very heart of the Constitution through the medium of long possession and desuetude. It is the strongest power which by degrees advances and gains ground, and the weakest which retreats and abandons it. Here we have no test ; it is time which confirms these slow conquests and these silent abandonments. There is no exact moment when the right of the one is actually extinguished or set aside for the benefit of the right of the other. When the moment has arrived for the removal of the last doubt regarding the new outline of the limit between the two rights, an indeterminate number of years will be found to have already elapsed during which the limit has been imperceptibly shifting and changing position. It is in this way that the equilibrium of the great constitutional factors has become modified during the last century. It has been entirely readjusted, so to speak, and yet so unobtrusively, by such imperceptible oscillatory movements, under cover of appearances so happily invariable, that certain lawyers occu-

pied with the letter and inattentive to the spirit, have been unable to perceive any alteration. The requisite transformation has been accomplished in such a way that the man engaged in a life of activity is never conscious of the disturbing impression that something essential behind him is no longer the same, nor thinks of asking himself if he ought not to stop and turn round in order to reconsider the general conditions of the environment in which his activity is exercised.

The Frenchman is like a mechanician infatuated with a theory, who sets to work to alter his machine in accordance with the model of a diagram he is incessantly endeavouring to perfect. The Englishman, on the other hand, resembles a practitioner who is always trying to get the utmost possible result from his apparatus. He is careful not to alter the position nor the motors. To do so he knows would necessitate a suspension of the working, and both time and the interest of a certain capital would be wasted. He also knows that any check on the action, resulting from an improvised adaptation, would mean less production during a certain period. If he decides to adopt some modification he carries it out, or allows it to be carried out, by slipping the straps of the old wheel on to the new wheels, without stopping the movement or interrupting the production.

CHAPTER II

THE PARTY MAN

1.—*The Choice of an Opinion and the Liberty of Indifference.*

I HAVE pointed out elsewhere that the English have a predilection for contention and movement ; they like to act for the sake of action, even independently of results. It is a kind of idealism peculiar to themselves ; and seems to denote the practical turn of their mind. The two things are so indissolubly blended in the English character that casual observers confuse the one with the other ; but in reality they are entirely different. In order thoroughly to comprehend the English character it is necessary to distinguish them, and to appreciate at its proper value this disinterested belief in action, this poetry of the will, insistent though half disguised by the many efforts calculated with a view to a practical termination.

Another and equally distinguishing characteristic of the English is their inability to generalise broadly and logically ; they quickly grow weary of the pursuit of abstractions and experience great relief in halting half way on the steep slope, at a point where we should find it infinitely more difficult to stop than to slide to the bottom. This idealism on the one hand, and incapacity on the other, through the medium of their indirect consequences, have exercised a remarkable influence on the organisation and maintenance of the great parties into which England is divided.

How does man select the ideas which shall direct the course

of his activity? Here, again, we find a preponderance of the same dominating force. The choice is made in the presence, and, as it were, under the eyes of an impatient third party: the desire for action, always anxious for a field for expansion. The weight of arguments or flawless evidence are not in themselves sufficient to decide him; he does not allow them the opportunity of operating freely and at leisure. Certainly they weigh in his final determination, but on the condition that the examination does not demand too much study and time, nor entail overmuch hesitation in arriving at action. The intelligence of the Englishman is too slow to allow of the delay of a prolonged deliberation. He is too much in haste to determine the direction of his will, so that its course may be the sooner commenced, and therefore he curtails the preliminaries. The marvels of logical deduction which we meet among English publicists are no contradiction of this theory. In fact they usually assume the form of a laborious confirmation of an adopted thesis, rather than a prolonged search for a truth which but slowly obtains the acquiescence of the mind. It is the condensed logic of the apologist, rather than the facile investigation of the thinker. In short, let us say at once that the choice or a political creed in England is, as a rule, hasty, superficial, and in a certain sense fantastic. There is always an inner voice which urges that the important thing is not to select the best cause, but having selected one, whatever it may be—provided it be plausible—to adhere to it tenaciously and at all costs. The paucity of general ideas and the suspicion which absolute propositions excite in England, help to make the choice of opinions to a large extent arbitrary. Absolute propositions alone can have absolute contradictions, between which and themselves they destroy all equilibrium, throwing on one side or the other the whole weight of the will and the mind. Considerations of practical utility alone retain an even balance, comprehending and reconciling to a certain extent the for and the against; thus too often the mind is left in a

sort of liberty of indifference, and then it is that the choice between opinions of almost equal possibilities is left to circumstance and self-interest. Absolute propositions might be compared to a peak the sides of which are precipitous slopes; each drop of water which falls down them must hurry direct to the bottom of the valley. Considerations of practical utility, on the other hand, resemble a lightly undulating plateau, where the line of division wavers between the two sides of the gentle declivity; local accident alone determines down which of the two each streamlet shall flow.

To sum up, the political convictions of Englishmen are neither so deep, deliberate, nor imperative as those of other nations, and the reasons which determine them are not of the most elevated character. Rapidly conceived, arbitrarily chosen, they are none the less tenacious and permanent, because the same need and impatience for action which cuts short the deliberation during which they are evolved resists any interruption of the action for the purpose of further study. This tenacity has its origin in a consideration of practical utility, rather than in the force of intellectual compliance.

2.—*The "Pressure from without" and the "Concessionary Principle."*

Let us apply the foregoing considerations to the statesman. All his thoughts and actions proceed, as we shall see, from this abstract psychology; they confirm and verify it.

In the first place, his chief care is to be always upon the parliamentary tapis, by means of any bills which happen to interest the public. The leaders of the party in power know that there is at least one thing the people will not tolerate, viz., an appearance of inactivity or impotence. Even if they have but few matured or practical ideas they nevertheless draw up a programme crowded with measures relating to both

foreign and home policy; and they take a pride in carrying it out in its entirety. The Duke of Richmond, wishing to justify the small *éclat* of a session during which the Cabinet had been composed of himself and his friends, exclaimed, "After all, we have passed as many Bills as our predecessors." Thus he gloried in the production for the sake of the production, apart from the importance of its results, the expenditure of brute force apart from useful effect.

Another source of impulsion, the efficacy of which is deepened by the indifference of this political scepticism, is the activity displayed by agitators outside Parliament in favour of such and such a measure, and the noise it makes, the emotion it excites among the populace. Nothing is more remarkable than the kind of fatalism with which the British statesmen witness these demonstrations, watching them grow and preparing to give way to them. This is because they have no abstract principles which might be for them the object of a personal faith, and give them the strength to say "No," resolutely and indefinitely. It is also because a courageous and tenacious will, to whatever end it may be directed, exercises in England the influence we only accord in France to right and justice valued for their own sake. Whoever in England desires a thing obstinately and vehemently is on that account alone presumed to have right on his side. When men who have the responsibility of power take the initiative, it is never on the sole impulse of a personal theoretical conviction; they wait until some doctrine or other has taken consistency and solidity among the people themselves, and a *pressure from without*—this is the phrase hallowed by custom—joins its ardent force to the feeble authority of principles. This condition fulfilled, they obey, or allow it to be understood they will obey. Doubtless the resistance of the Government to certain innovations might be serious, vehement, and prolonged; but it never would be expressed by a *non possumus*. On the contrary, there is a universal consciousness from the

very beginning that they have made up their minds to give in some day, after the expedient of adjournments is exhausted; and all the work then consists, if the reform is deemed dangerous, in contriving a method of amending the law, or interpreting its clauses in such a way as to limit the anticipated evil. In France, our statesmen have never felt, or at least have never displayed, this somewhat servile deference to the mere wishes of the populace, apart from the rights of which they may be the expression, and to the partial and irregular manifestations by which the populace tentatively make their wishes known outside the official channels provided by the constitution. In England the "concessionary principle" (Disraeli's phrase) has inspired the politics of each party in power successively. There is, practically, a tacit compact between the Government and the men who organise the pressure from without. Provided the latter succeed in maintaining and strengthening this pressure for a more or less lengthened period, it is understood that satisfaction will eventually be granted to them; and so agitation has become a regular institution in England, with an organised system, recognised rights, and an assured success. Perhaps it would have seemed puerile to us to hear the papers, in 1867, enumerate and cast up the sums subscribed for or against an amendment of the electoral law, calculate the number of those present at the meetings of the respective parties, and dispute the length of the processions formed by the petitioners. But these futile debates were only the outward expression of a desire to establish an unassailable argument, of the self-assertion of a powerful and active will, which was gradually mastering the whole country.

3.—*Division of the Aristocracy.*

Another striking characteristic of the English political world is the perfect ease and nonchalant audacity with which one half of the upper class separates itself from the other,

enters the camp of the Radicals, converts their principles to its own use, and commences a half-hearted attack upon its own privileges, without renouncing any of the customs, feelings and relations by which the unity of the caste are preserved. It is like a tacit understanding by which, while some of the garrison continue to hold out, others feign disloyalty, mingle with the assailants, ardently espouse their cause, and yet, in order to prevent the ruin and sack of the town, a catastrophe for all concerned, endeavour to gradually turn the siege into a blockade, delaying the attacks, sparing the citadel as long as possible, and delaying, and finally humanising the inevitable victory. One day, in my presence, a noble lord of the Whig party compared Parliament to a traveller in a sledge, pursued by a band of famished wolves. From time to time he throws them quarters of venison to distract their attention and keep them back, so that, half satiated, they may be less ferocious when they gain the horse's head. Of course it is necessary to husband the venison, and make it last as long as possible by cutting it up into little pieces. Part of our nobility, he said, meritoriously devote themselves to this ungrateful task. Although this statement may be an exaggeration, there is truth in it, and it is impossible not to admire in this *rôle*, which is accepted and filled by the Liberal fraction of the English aristocracy, on the one hand the decision, constancy and simplicity which they bring to it, and on the other, its leaven of political scepticism, elasticity of ideas, and, in a word, the option of indifference between two contrary doctrines.

The feeling which animates the ruling classes in England is tinged with the bold, almost reckless, optimism of which I have already made mention. They are convinced that a strong will can coerce both man and things, that there is no difficulty it cannot surmount, no situation so unfortunate it cannot extract some good from it, no mischievous institution the influence of which it cannot correct, and that nothing need be despaired of nor compromised with whilst the will still

holds its own. The Conservative party, believing itself to be endowed with this powerful corrective, this remedy for every ill, naturally regards the measures which the Radical party force upon it from an entirely different standpoint to that of our reactionaries. It may disapprove of the measures; when they triumph it is not discouraged; it never regards them as containing the ineluctable essence of dissolution and death; and it does not believe that they are destined to destroy everything unless it prevents them by repeal. In its opinion an Act of Parliament, a paper with black marks, cannot possess so much virtue that human energy cannot out-do it. Thus it comes about that England has never known those laws of reaction which have so uselessly disfigured and dishonoured our Parliamentary history. The Conservative party has always refused to look back or to retrace its steps along a road it has already travelled over. It settles down each time in the situation that the last reforms accomplished have made for it; because its abstract convictions to the contrary have not sufficient distinctness and intolerant vigour to enable it to regard these reforms as absolutely preposterous and detestable; and also because its confidence in the empire of the discreet and persevering will prevents it from believing that all will be lost if they continue in force. It takes the helm and hoists the sail in order to tack about, and thus the less swiftly be carried along by the current; it never takes an oar and tries to go back. We should form a false idea of the political history of England if we did not take into consideration this curious psychological combination in which optimism and scepticism are blended with a relative indifference in regard to principles and an ardent faith in the resources of human energy.

4.—*Electoral Reforms and the Representation of the Minorities.*

Let us no longer ask what is the general impulse by which rulers are swayed, but what determines the direction in which

they are impelled by opinion. We can find no clearer nor more significant illustration of this subject than the history of electoral reforms. In all the discussions to which this question has given rise, both in Parliament and outside it, before and after 1832, the natural rights of man, which in France are the basis of such debates, are alluded to merely by chance. In 1867 we get the valuable evidence of the Honourable George Brodrick, who set at defiance the adversaries of the proposed extension by pointing out that one publicist alone had presented the franchise as a natural right of the citizen. It is at least the invariable rule that neither Conservatives nor Liberals, nor even many Radicals, consent to admit as a substantial political element the individual regarded in the inanity of his general conception. It seems to them an abstraction pushed too far, void of all substance and so trifling that they are not conscious of holding anything when such rarified matter is all they have in their hands. Certainly they do not forego all exercise of the faculty of abstraction, but they instinctively stop half way through the operation, on arriving at a point where concrete reality still holds the chief place. They do not go beyond the idea of classes, particular corporations, and towns, which are merely assemblages of certain persons, or of certain districts which can be considered one by one. The discussions which have been held since 1854 on proportional representation are in this connection very instructive. One of the objections continually raised against the clause of minorities, which was eventually included in the Act of 1867, was that the House represents not individuals but representative bodies.[1] As Gladstone said, the principle of Parliamentary representation is, that each assembly of electors must be considered as forming an entity in itself, a moral personality. What is wanted in the House is to know the ruling opinion of each community. He further declared that the clause meant the substitution of the representation of

[1] Mr. Hardcastle.

citizens for that of communities, which had hitherto been the rule. Another member added that if of the three seats assigned to Manchester one was in the minority, two of the three members neutralised each other's suffrage, with the result that this great community had practically only one voice in Parliament. The desire was to augment the influence of the great towns, but it was done in such a way that the metropolis of Lancashire did not weigh heavier in the scale of Parliamentary votes than Arundel, and if the clause of minorities were allowed to stand it would weigh even less. In these remarks the inability and disinclination of the English mind to pursue abstractions to the end is clearly evident, as is also the ease with which it will stop and attach itself to those intermediary divisions where the particular is seen and felt in the very midst of an average generality. The other considerations which, in 1832 and 1884, were introduced into the discussion on electoral reform are equally alien to the law of abstraction ; they are entirely practical. An attentive analysis shows them to be two in number, and common to reformers and their opponents : (1) What is the surest means of forming a good government, a government equal to its responsibilities ? (2) What is the surest means of maintaining an educative political activity among the popular masses ? Reformers, in order to democratise the franchise, cite the force that a more extended representation would give the Government, the presumable sagacity of the classes for which it is desired to obtain the right of suffrage, and the public interests which would be furthered by such participation in the constitution of authority. Others set against these advantages the danger of submerging the enlightened classes in the flood of the unenlightened, of placing the Government at the mercy of the prejudices and passions of the ignorant and partial masses, and of exposing the masses themselves to the deplorable suggestions of the omnipotent power. Neither the reformers nor their opponents ever dream of aspiring to an

ideal proportionality in the prerogative of the franchise and the division of electoral power, or even of seeking the least imperfect approximations to these ends. We have seen that of proportional representation, which is a principle, in 1867 only the representation of the minorities, which is an expedient, was still in existence. It had been retained in the form of a strictly limited exception, applicable to only a few assemblies of electors ; and it was from contempt, indolence, and a desire to finish with the Bill, that the great majority of the House of Commons, Disraeli and his Government, Gladstone and the bulk of the Opposition, all equally hostile to the clause, resigned themselves to allowing this fantasy of Lord Cairns to pass, ratified by a vote of emergency in the House of Lords. The clause has disappeared ; it was dropped directly the electoral law was again taken up.

In reality, the dislike it inspired was chiefly owing to its pretension to diminish the excitement and heat of political struggles. The English would prefer it to render them more ardent. And here we touch on the second consideration that I have pointed out. The answer over and over again has been, echoing Cobden's saying, that the minority has only one right, viz., to use every effort to become in its turn the majority ; and it is not good for it to be spared these efforts. To assure for it in every place a representation proportionate to the number of its adherents would be to take away from it the source of its energy and passion, its eagerness to persuade, to dominate, or to escape from the domination of others ; it would become accustomed to reap, without any output of energy, the fruits of the law, and we should soon witness the disappearance of the "healthy activity" which the elections maintain in all parts of the country when the local majority in each place alone profits by them. The consequences of such a generalised system would be a growing languor in political life, a stoppage of the national will. In Parliament itself a stagnant representation, or one with little fleeting, flickering

waves, would replace the powerful current, the impetus of which sustains and urges forward the statesmen, and renders them capable of a broad and steadfast policy. We can see the general tone of the reasoning by which the English mind is swayed. The idea of equity has no part in it. Moral effects alone are regarded. These optimists believe that liberty is sufficient to assure the supremacy of the best. Certainly it is not contempt of minorities which transpires in the arguments I have repeated: in no country is more attention paid to their proceedings and their progress. But much less consideration is devoted to their abstract rights than to the means of keeping them active, deliberate and progressive. They do not receive their due in order that they may strive to claim and take it. We recognise here again the twofold character of indifference to rational principles, and of confident and passionate interest attaching to the energetic exercise of the human will.

CHAPTER III

THE STATESMAN

1.—*The Division of Men into Parties.*

I HAVE shown in a previous work the fortunate conjunction of historical circumstances which assisted the development of the system of parties into its present form.[1] But for the oligarchal organisation of society which prevailed at the end of the eighteenth century it would have been difficult for the parties in the State to have been reduced to two and maintained at that number; to have taken consistency and become accustomed to discipline under a chief; and difficult, too, would it have been to consummate the formation of two compact groups of statesmen whose uninterrupted alternation in power has become an established fact, a rule accepted and observed. But the historical circumstances were seconded by causes even more profound—I mean the peculiar qualities and defects of the national character. Here, again, we find the impatient need to exercise force, and lack of inclination and ability to generalise, or to be guided by those generalisations which originally determined the method of accepting certain reasons for acting in concert, viz., by a properly constituted party with leaders at its head. None the less has it a subtle secret psychology which must be separated, analysed and pursued to its final consequences.

[1] See in *Le Developpement de la Constitution et de la Société politique en Angleterre*, the chapter entitled, "Oligarchie et le régime parlementaire."

The whole organisation and history of the two political parties bears the imprint of the character I have just defined. There are few, if any, neutrals in England. Every man is enrolled in some party, for the simple reason that he thus finds himself provided with a ready-made sphere of activity. In the choice of a party he is singularly free from hindrances in following either the traditions of his family, the antecedents of his local following, or the interests of his career. In England there are assemblies of electors which are Liberal or Conservative, simply because they began with a certain political creed, and, in the case of the immense majority, the general reasons for changing it have never been sufficiently defined nor strong enough to rob them of the creditable desire to remain faithful to their past. When young Coningsby, the hero of one of Disraeli's novels, took it into his head to form a deliberate conviction, his grandfather cried: "You go with your family, sir, like a gentleman; you are not to consider your opinions, like a philosopher or a political adventurer."

In substance, therefore, the parties, rather than resembling two groups of believers endeavouring to propagate a doctrine, are like two groups of combatants contesting a field of action, who inscribe a device on their standard by which they may be identified. It is a well-known fact that both Pitt and Fox hesitated for some time at the outset of their careers, and finally joined a party which they afterwards forsook. Evidently the differences in political *credos* were insignificant in their eyes. The one important thing was to open a career for their young abilities which they were eager to have an opportunity of exercising and putting to the test; they both esteemed power to render service to their country as much under the banner of the Tory as that of the Whig.

Between the Whigs and the Tories a complete exchange of doctrines was effected in the course of a century without a similar exchange of names. Lord Mahon pointed out the significant fact that the opinions of a Tory in 1790 were

exactly the same as those of a Whig in 1890, and *vice versâ*—proof positive that these opinions do not of necessity enter into the definition of the two terms.[1] Must I recall how Sir Robert Peel on two occasions presented to Parliament, and supported with the whole weight of his authority as leader of a party, the important measures which that party and he had spent years in contesting and denouncing: the emancipation of the Catholics and the abolition of the Corn Laws? At the time when the latter of these measures was passed, Lord Wellington expressed the opinion that if the House of Lords represents conservatism in the Constitution, this conservatism ought to be subordinated to the interests of the public and the "march of affairs." The obligation the two Houses are under "to insure that the Queen's Government will be carried on" was in the eyes of this statesman an interest excelling all others; thus he ranked a practical result, the efficiency of the Government, far above fidelity to the principles of the party of which he was the leader. In more recent times the Conservatives have been known to borrow the measures of the advanced Liberals without any embarrassment. The Derby-Disraeli ministry imitated the great electoral reform of 1867, which far exceeded anything the Radical Bright himself had ever demanded. It was at this juncture Lord Derby said he did not intend to allow the Liberals to have the monopoly of Reform measures; the Tories must have their share in them.

But it was chiefly in 1885 that the Tory party, like the Liberal party, allowed its supreme and cynical indifference to all the principles on which the unity of a party can be built up to appear. In 1885 Parnell disposed of Ireland; after the elections he found himself at the head of a compact following of eighty-six members, a very obvious interest would therefore

[1] Lecky has disputed Lord Mahon's assertion; he certainly had yielded more or less to the fascination of paradox, but, granting all the amendments, the assertion remains exact in substance, at least in the proportion necessary to justify our statement.

be served in gaining him over. Without hesitation or embarrassment the Tory party renounced all its traditions ; the special legislation for the repression of crime was not renewed in Ireland. Negotiations cloaked in mystery were opened with Parnell. The hope that they would obtain more from the Tories than the Liberals was carefully fanned among the Irish members.[1] The suspicion cast on the administration of the former viceroy of Ireland, Lord Spencer, was said to be well founded, and a wrongful pretence was made of consenting to the re-examination of the acts of this statesman. As Mr. Chamberlain said, the Tories might form the ministry, but the Radicals were in power. However, Gladstone intended that his opponents should incur all the responsibility of having allowed the Act for the repression of crimes to expire ; he insinuated that he would have preserved certain of its clauses, especially those for the punishment of boycotting. He asserted the necessity of maintaining in the code of laws for Ireland the supremacy of the Crown, the unity of the empire, and the authority of Parliament, which is the one effectual guarantee of the latter. On these conditions only could an extended local self-government be granted. Parnell invited Gladstone to draw up a scheme, and the latter haughtily refusing, the leader of the Irish party in the next elections went over with all his forces to the side of the Tories.

Immediately after the elections Lord Salisbury, like the practical man he was, recognised the futility of continuing an alliance all the advantages of which he had exhausted. Even with the support of the eighty-six Irish his continuance in power would not be secured. He therefore deliberately turned against them and proclaimed measures of repression against the Irish National League. Gladstone, in his turn, ignoring his recent declarations, opened negotiations with Parnell, and threw in

[1] Lord Carnarvon, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, made them understand that if necessary he would go as far as Parnell. At least, this was the uncontradicted testimony of a member worthy to be believed.

his lot with him. The Bill he presented on April 8, 1886, sanctioned Home Rule in another guise. It was thrown out, and on this occasion the late Tory, once leader of the Whigs, and afterwards of the Liberals, employed the language of the Radical and the demagogue. He blindly appealed to the "masses" against the enlightened "classes," and proclaimed with a mysticism which seemed borrowed from Victor Hugo, his belief in the unerring nature of the popular instinct. More and more he inclined towards the side for which he had already a penchant, and eventually he became the defender and surety of the National League he had once inexorably opposed. On the other hand, whilst Lord Salisbury, again in power, returned to the traditions of his party by setting in motion a special system of prevention and repression in Ireland, his most influential colleague, Lord Randolph Churchill, leader of the Tories in the House of Commons, indubitably deviated from the lines laid down by the Conservatives. Without laying himself open to the disavowal of his chief, he took up the principal measures he had ardently combated when the Liberals were in the Government and he was in the Opposition : the closure to the simple majority ; new facilities granted through the medium of the local authorities for making the agricultural labourers proprietors or holders of lots of land (in this connection the orator acknowledged Mr. Jesse Collings and Mr. Chamberlain as the initiators of this reform, the self-same one which had overthrown the Tory Cabinet) ; the sale of glebe lands ; a re-modelling of the tithes, which in future were to be paid by the proprietors ; a revision of the railway tariff (project borrowed from the Liberal minister, Mr. Mundella), the establishment of a really popular form of local government in England, and an analogous reform in Ireland ; and the development of popular education (there is nothing to prevent us from supposing that free education was to be included among the projected improvements). Politics is not a science of the past, added the orator, but a science of the

future; it does not consist in looking behind, but makes a business of progress.

Is a last trait required, the most striking of all?

A year later the Lord High Chancellor of the same Conservative Cabinet initiated a motion, two clauses of which dealt with the suppression, one of entails, and the other of the right of primogeniture, in succession to landed property *ab intestat.* Two of the most powerful supports of the landed aristocracy shaken by those whose official duty it was to protect them! What could be more unexpected? The paradox was made complete by the ministerial Act concerning local government, which removed from the landed proprietors their administrative powers in the counties, transferring them to an elective council; and thus the third support of the oligarchy of land tottered and fell. The Bill was an effectual diversion; it threw the Irish question into the shade, but at what cost? The divergence of doctrines is obviously of such secondary importance that there is perhaps no single measure, however characteristic and extreme it may be in a certain sense, of which it can be confidently asserted that it will never figure in the programme of one of the two parties. Option in the choice of opinions, rarity of profound conviction, the obstinacy of the wrestler rather than the stability and tenacity of the believer, the universal empire and exterior permanence of the parties, the inward variability of their doctrines, and finally the reign of opportunism—expediency—unshackled by its principles, concealed under a specious appearance and an orderly method of procedure capable of deceiving the superficial observer; these are the facts which a careful study of the mechanism of the will reveal to us.

2.—*Androlatry.*

We must not be persuaded, however, that the English political world has no serious object in view, no ideal that it contemplates with fervour. But, owing to the lack of interest

in general ideas, this object, this ideal, is not a doctrine, but a man, the protagonist and hero. The English nation could more readily dispense with belief in an abstraction than with belief in a personality. At almost every epoch in its existence it has been possessed by the image of some citizen, brave, assiduous, energetic, always ready to step into the breach, a type of the active virtues which the race conceives to be the highest of moral perfections. The disproportionate place which biographies hold in English literature testifies to this sort of political anthropomorphism: the preponderance of the individual over the idea. We shall have no difficulty in perceiving the immense import of its consequences.

In every form of government there are three essentials, viz., that the supreme power should be undivided in spirit, resolute in action, and energetic in movement. But of all forms of government, that by a Parliament is perhaps the least capable of fulfilling these conditions, when the cohesion of political parties, indispensable mediums of this particular form of government, is solely maintained by community of doctrines. Doctrinal convictions are, as a matter of fact, self-opinionated and unreasonable; they combine the literal creed of their formulas with an irritable realisation of the almost imperceptible differences which distinguish them. Their invariable tendency is to cause internal division in each party in such a way that it is impossible for the Government to be anything but the feeble result of a compromise or the fragile result of a coalition. Further, each of the divisions thus created unceasingly puts forward its theoretic scruples and endeavours to exact conditions in such a way that the Government is frequently driven into a resolution by the threat of secession, and is obliged to adopt half-hearted and complex measures, instead of the free and simple methods which are the conditions of all great success. Finally, devotion to a doctrine is as intolerant and unreasonable as devotion to a religion. The members of a party among whom it forms the sole connecting

link always have an invincible reluctance to suffer their leader to compound with events, or to admit that he can learn anything from time and experience ; they will not tolerate in him any infidelity, however fleeting, to their principles ; if he sincerely modifies his opinions they immediately disown him and refuse to follow him one step along the new path on which he has set out.

The preponderance of the individual over the doctrine has safeguarded England against any troublesome results from the Parliamentary system. It is one of the miracles of political history that this country has been able to preserve, in a Government at the mercy of parties, the singleness of outlook, certainty in action, and capability of evolution, which formed a compensation for the arbitrary power of the old monarchic institution. The secret of this miracle is to be found in the sort of fetichism with which the nation regards the personalities of her great men. There is no country where public opinion places on a higher pinnacle the citizen esteemed worthiest to govern, invests him more ostentatiously with omnipotent power, or more urgently bids his fellows obey him. It was no Whig or Liberal Parliament that the nation elected in 1841, 1857, and 1880, but a Peelite, a Palmerstonian and a Gladstonian Parliament. Each of these elections was in reality a plebiscite establishing a temporary dictatorship for the benefit of one man. These three personages were real Premiers, *principes*, ministerial Cæsars, active and omnipotent, by the side of an Augustan dynasty fallen into decay.

Here, indeed, we find personal unity of supreme authority. On the other hand, the unity of each party being founded on loyalty to an individual rather than on attachment to a doctrine, theoretical divergences are powerless to divide it up, a glance or an imperious word from the leader being sufficient to recall the dissentients to their duty.[1] It is remarkable that since the

[1] One day Lord Althorp, finding himself unable to refute the arguments of the Leader of the Opposition, frankly confessed to his followers that, at

beginning of the century, except after 1840 and in our own times, the English Parliament has never known a third party, not even little groups proceeding from the disintegration of the two great parties, Whig and Tory; I do not count the Irish, who must be considered as an outside faction. We cannot but remember the fatal influence intermediary factions have exercised in our Parliaments. In England no such dissolvent exists, doctrinal divergences are obliterated by an overwhelming sentiment of allegiance to the Premier. The preponderance of this sentiment was made manifest in recent years by the extreme perplexity and half-ashamed attitude of the Unionist party at the moment of its formation, and by the adherence of the immense majority of the Liberal party to Gladstone at a time when a question was raised in which all the traditions and instincts of the country were arrayed against him, and any one but himself would have been in the lowest minority.

Finally, and for the same reason, every English statesman has at his command a large credit of inconsequence and inconstancy, on the sole condition that his alternations of opinion do not appear to spring from a failure of will power or self-abandonment. The latter is the only fault the country will not tolerate in those it has exalted above their fellows. No other nation has shown itself more indulgent to the recantations of its political men, nor followed them with greater docility, once they had been elected leaders, through evolutions which to us would seem extravagant. Lord Salisbury and Lord Randolph Churchill began by being the *enfants terribles* of their parties, but that did not prevent their eventually becoming official and esteemed representatives. The public lives of Sir Robert Peel, Disraeli and Gladstone furnish illustrations of the lengths to

the moment, he was incompetent to reply, but, he added, he knew he had once conceived good reasons for the opposite point of view, which would have obtained the acquiescence of the House; he asked the Liberal party to take his word for this, and to base their decision, not so much on the reasons he was unable to produce, as on a blind confidence in the loyalty and ability of their leader. This appeal was understood.

which this extraordinary tolerance will go, and of the kind of optimistic and contented *androlatry* which disposes the public to take in good part anything its favourites may do. The career of Mr. Chamberlain provides us with a recent and striking example of the immovable fidelity of once formed public opinion to a man who is himself unfaithful to his principles. Mr. Chamberlain began by counselling the abandonment of Egypt, finally he recommended its unlimited occupation ; he began by opposing all colonial expansion, finally he declared that the possessions over-seas formed the principal and most enduring element of the national grandeur ; he began by championing a system of Home Rule for Ireland, finally he became its most outspoken opponent ; in 1881 and 1884 he was a member of the Cabinet which signed the two treaties assuring the independence of the Transvaal : some years later he was associated with the Jameson Raid and openly opposed, in the course of long and treacherous negotiations, the autonomy of the South African Republic. Not one of these alternations, to all appearance scandalous, has been able to impair his popularity, and this because the man himself remains unchanged ; his speeches are as cutting, his criticisms as sarcastic, his apostrophes as insolent as ever : he is still as addicted to parliamentary irregularities and diplomatic incongruities, as self-willed in the reverses which fortune thrusts upon him, and as convinced that the end justifies the means. With equal enthusiasm he has embraced restricted Radicalism and extravagant Imperialism : the two manifestations of contemporary democracy. It is this identity of the man with himself, this perpetuity of tenacity and force, even when applied to objects unworthy in themselves, which are the cause of his extraordinary influence and inexplicable good fortune.

Whoever measures in thought the facilities which this turn of mind secures to a Parliamentary government is tempted to ask himself if it is not a condition, not only favourable but essential and necessary, and if the deformations of type which

this system of government has sustained in other countries, or the hindrances it has encountered there, are not simply due to the fact that this solid sentimental basis is lacking to the liberty and authority of the supreme power. England is assuredly a country of good sense and practical mind. But to assure the discipline of the various parties it is not enough to oppose practical sense and experience to the pretensions and arrogance of doctrinal convictions. Practical sense demands too sustained an effort on the part of the attention and the will, consequently its action is too interrupted; and it is too liable to be undermined and combated by sophistry to furnish a durable foundation for a political institution. No lasting organisation can be established on a mere sentiment, or a moral force, the operation of which is unconscious and mechanical. This it is which gives its immense value to what I call the political androlatry of the English, the idealism of a personal object which is like an ethnical tendency, a blind and deep-rooted instinct of the race.

CHAPTER IV

THE LAW AND PUBLIC OPINION

We should be greatly deceived if we supposed that the word "law" finds an exact equivalent in the French "*loi*." The French word has a more restricted, a more definite sense. When we speak of a law we mean an imperative rule, every word of which has been weighed; a rule that has been promulgated on a certain date, and is the fruit of the deliberation of the authority which we believe to be the most capable of drawing up reasonable rules; it embodies the deliberate will of this authority. The word "law" certainly has this signification, but in common with many others. Besides the Parliamentary law which answers to our *loi*, it embraces the common law, made up of customs and precedents, the judge-made law, made up of jurisprudence, and the subject-made law, made up of resolutions voted among themselves by the subjects of the Queen, relating chiefly to commercial matters. All this is law, and therefore the word corresponds more to the word "*droit*" in French or Latin than to the word "*loi*."

The different categories into which the *loi*, or rather the *droit*, is divided in England, merit some attention. The common law forms the basis of all civil and criminal legislation; and is rendered complete and definite by the jurisprudence of the courts of common law and the jurisdiction of equity. Nothing is lacking to its constitution as a complete and independent law. Only in those matters which at the outset

were not regulated by the civil law was the Parliamentary law able to intervene; but, having once gained a footing, its supremacy, which in other countries is uncertain and fitful, soon became recognised in all those departments of the law with which, at first, it had nothing to do. Let us take, for example, the position of the married woman; this position was originally determined by the common law; but the day came when the women of the upper classes could no longer endure it. Was Parliament called upon to interfere? Certainly not. The court of equity brought its jurisprudence to bear upon the modification and mitigation of the original semi-barbarous regulations, and the first law worthy of the name was put into force in 1870. This provides an almost complete illustration of the exact position and importance of each different section of the law. What we should consider an imperfect and superannuated disposition of justice, to be replaced without delay by practical laws, is from the English point of view adequate in every sense and equal, or even preferable, to justice practically applied; the English only formulate a law when the common law or the Pretorian law diverge too flagrantly from the legal system they are desirous of upholding.

Is a further illustration necessary? Let us consider the criminal law. In France, we have drawn it up in such a way that, in the category of causes which concern the honour and life of our citizens, every detail is regulated by an exact text; nothing is left to the discretion of the judge. In England, the opposite method has been followed. The criminal law belongs almost entirely to the common law; and every care has been taken to leave it untouched. It has been considered wise to complete it by a long series of judgments covering every possible case. The pliability and variety of this method of jurisprudence is considered best fitted for so delicate a matter; the trenchant language of the law being thereby avoided.

We must now explain the general aspect presented, not by the law but by British legislation. At a first glance the most

striking though negative trait which characterises English statutory legislation is, that the necessity for logical sequence and uniformity is weak or non-existent. Parliament has no hesitation in admitting some of the corollaries of a general truth, while rejecting or adjourning others, although they may all appear to obtrude with an equally urgent logical necessity. When to introduce a reform, it begins with a limited number of facts, or a certain province, it feels in no way obliged, urged, nor even tempted to include every other fact in connection with the subject, or every other province to which precisely the same reasons apply, and which decided it to intervene. At the end of the eighteenth century a comparatively liberal legislation for the cotton industry, and a legislation which was extravagantly protectionist and minutely regulative for the woollen industry, existed side by side. Such a contradiction was in no way repellant to the English mind ; the faculty of generalisation being too weak to raise any protest against it. During the whole of the long period when the Parliamentary statutes comprehended a systematic and rigorous regulation of labour, the jurisprudence of the tribunals was invariably conducted on the principle that labour ought to be free. This discrepancy and disorder in the sphere of authority created no surprise, nor was any impatience felt at its prolongation. Since 1819 innumerable factory acts have essayed to limit the hours and fix the conditions of labour for women and children in the manufactories, the only debatable point apparently being whether the State is under an obligation to protect the feeble and helpless against the egotism of those who would take advantage of them ; but even when this point was admitted, the law was merely a general one, no distinction at all being made between the various manufacturing industries. The English legislator began with a single industry, that of cotton, to this he successively added those of wool, silk, linen, the coal mines, the iron mines, the dye works, the match factories, the potteries, and last of all, attendance in shops. A

final Act in 1878 consolidated all these partial regulations. Instead of generalising in the beginning, and applying the regulation to the whole field over which the effects of the principle were felt, Parliament drew up a series of sectional and arbitrary laws, which it eventually combined and summarised. The antinomy caused no uneasiness nor did any one feel the necessity of resolving it.

If the necessity for logic is so small, the necessity for uniformity is even smaller; this is but natural. The magnificent development of English history has only been possible because the exclusive privileges granted to trade and commercial enterprises have been limited to certain places, and have never assumed the character of a general legislation. The new manufactories were established in little towns placed outside the radius of these regulations; there they could thrive unchecked, and gathered around them an immense working population; this is the reason why to-day, with the exception of London, the most important manufacturing centres are not to be found in the towns which, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, were esteemed the most populous and flourishing.

It is not irrelevant to observe that most of the principal English laws have been drawn up in consequence of, and in accordance with, the results of an inquiry. Now, it is difficult to extend an inquiry to every class of facts; for example, to every branch of industry comprised under the general heading of industrial labour; and it is necessary, if the inquiry is to be followed up, to limit it either to the mines, the cotton-spinning mills, the dye-works or the shops, in connection with which the inquiry has been made. It is therefore unusual for a general legislation to result from the vast mass of documents thus accumulated. On the other hand, the statute which results from the inquiry presents none of those qualities of connection and sequence which characterise French law. The inquiry is a whole collection of little facts, and when

an endeavour is made to draw conclusions from it, on one point the evidence is found to be contradictory and therefore a solution one way or the other would be unjustifiable ; on another point the evidence is insufficient, the question is not ripe ; and on a third, reasons of a general order prevent the adaptation of the exceedingly categorical conclusions contained in more than a hundred concordant answers. Nothing is left, therefore, as a matter of fact, to form the object of a legislation except a very small number of reasons, picked out at random, and without any consecutive order from the picture in which they all figure. How different from French law! We always bear in mind when we take up legislation some general principle from which we deduce formulas of a more limited character. All we ask from the inquiry, when one has been made, is an insight into the whole matter, confirming or negativing this general principle. Thus, without an effort, we command a view or the whole field of the law, and are never hindered by insufficient or contradictory results from an inquiry on any given point ; for on such a point, as on every other, our certainty comes to us from an all-embracing standpoint, and the whole statute is evolved, without encountering any contradiction, from the abstract idea which served us as the point of departure.

Let us now closely examine the varying character of the law considered in itself, and see under what form it appears. The French laws are, as a rule, limited to certain imperative, but simple provisions; they refer the care of organising the working out of detail to the executive power, which meets every requirement by regulations. The English are of opinion that the legislative power, even in its subordinate departments, should not be delegated ; Parliament expects to have the entire control ; itself, as a rule, enacting the necessary regulations and embodying them in the law, in a series of interminable, ramified, confused and diffused texts. See, for example, the Act of 1834 relating to municipal corporations, with its 141 Articles,

some of which are as long as a clause in the Code Napoleon. See the three great electoral laws of 1832, 1867 and 1872; which are overwhelming volumes in themselves; the last containing several addenda, the first of which in sixty-six articles is a regular set of laws in itself, covering every detail in connection with elections. It must be recognised that if there is one thing a body of 658 members, who have come from every part of the country, are unfitted for, it is to draw up a code of laws. But the English have made their choice between two evils. Hitherto they have exposed themselves to the inconveniences of an overloaded yet incomplete text, rather than allow the law to be interpreted by the administrative and official authority.

It has become the custom, in our time, to delegate a large proportion of administrative power to certain ministerial departments, particularly the department of Commerce, and the Local Government Board. They may draw up provisional orders to be laid upon the table in Parliament, which assume the force and authority of a law, and after a certain time pass into currency without opposition. Parliament therefore, in principle, is always the supreme authority; it alone has the power of conferring a legal value upon provisional orders drawn up by responsible bodies. Nothing could be more unlike laws enacted by decrees or drawn up in the form of regulations relating to public administration, which may be ignored by the Houses, and are complete without their confirmation.

The second point to be noticed is, that in the making of his laws the Englishman proceeds by enumerating cases, persons, or titles—which, however numerous they may be, are never complete—instead of proceeding by general enunciations. If, for instance, the matter under consideration is a robbery committed in a mine, he will enumerate the various kinds of ore capable of being worked and liable to be stolen: calamine, manganese, blacklead, coal, &c. Similarly, in the construction of houses, the legislator himself makes a list of the incom-

bustible materials. Surely this is a great mistake, for such enumerations are restrictive without being complete. It is true that the legislator generally follows up the catalogue of particular cases by a general provision covering other cases of the same kind. But this raises the question, Why, then, is the general provision not sufficient for him? Here is proof of weakness in the faculty of generalisation; the mind of an Englishman cannot make use all at once of abstract statements. Before he can handle them with ease he makes experiments with particular cases; he needs assurance that his formula is not an empty one but applicable to actual facts.

The third point which should be noted is the tendency of the English to avoid all general laws, viz., those which comprehend a matter in its entirety, and place it on a regular and definite footing. Perhaps this tendency is partly due to their consciousness that such a law, being of necessity long, complicated—particularly with their system of compilation—and rich in innovations and abrogations, would never be able to surmount the obstacles encountered in legislative procedure. They make it a rule to confine the legislation within the narrowest possible limits to points exactly specified, leaving the rest to be provided for by former texts. Run through the list of statutes for a year, 1868–69 for example. Deduct the Acts which relate to finance, and little more than a hundred will remain, forty-six of which were amendments or extensions of existing laws. The laws are frequently permissive or adoptive, particularly in matters of local administration; signifying that the legislator limited himself to describing a certain organisation, which urban corporations, for example, could adopt or reject at will. The Bill passes; the Press discuss it; a corporation chances it; the thing succeeds; an example is set, and opinion formed. When the movement is in working order, but not till then, the law is converted into a compulsory law. In like manner the laws are frequently temporary, a thing unknown among us since the Restoration. They are

frankly put forward as trial laws. For example, the law relating to secret voting. A careful study of the Statute book will show us that, even with permanent laws, the English make no pretension to what might be called finality, *i.e.*, to having made a law which may be taken as final and leaves no margin for appreciable modification. This emanates from a sense of equity. The Englishman is conscious of human inability to comprehend a considerable space or time ; he feels the necessity of taking things quietly and by degrees, of proceeding by curves of wide radius so that there is no risk of the locomotive being upset by too sharp a turn. Our neighbours have profited by this circumspection. Their laws have not suffered revolution any more than their political institutions. I mean that a statute is rarely a direct contradiction to the statute it replaces ; it is merely an amendment. But who cannot see that this must result in the division of the legislation into minute sections, and the enormous accumulation of legislative texts in force, at the same time, and on the same subject ? Quite recently a parish having occasion to ascertain their rights in a question of public hygiene, their counsel discovered that there were twenty-seven laws on the subject, wholly or partially in force, to which it was necessary to refer. In 1873, at a meeting of the London Statistical Society, it was pointed out that the laws on marriage were contained in about thirty statutes, which had to be applied by 15,000 clergymen and 2,000 or 3,000 civil officials. Further, many sections of these statutes having been repealed or fallen into disuse, it was often difficult to distinguish them ; the result being the gravest irregularities in this very important matter.

The law was not only divided up and scattered over an infinity of little statutes, but its phraseology was very defective, by which I mean that not only was one law often in contradiction to other laws still in force, but the end was often in direct opposition to the beginning. This was largely owing to the fact that the English did not, like us, have special com-

missions made up as far as possible of men who were authorities on the subject; they simply held committees of the whole House, distinguishable from the sittings of the House itself only by the presidentship, which devolved not on the Speaker but on some other member, and by the procedure, which afforded greater facilities for conversation and the observations of the various members; but the composition was the same, *i.e.*, all the members of the House might be present and take part in the discussion if they wished. The result was that, either during the committee or the ensuing sitting of the House, every one of the 658 members was tempted to have his say, and, without any preparation, to propose an amendment, thereby disturbing the constitution of a law which he had not comprehended in its entirety, and with all the parts of which he was not acquainted. It was evident that there was a danger in this which was increased and aggravated in proportion to the number of members present. The laws evolved by so complicated an elaboration were naturally extremely confused; they were thrown back into indecision by the superabundance and lack of harmony of the provisions which were supposed to make every part of them clear. Lord Brougham criticised this manner of law-making with his customary bitterness. The inconvenience of it grew to such a pitch that in 1850 it was considered obligatory to vote for a statute revising another statute, which had been incautiously voted for in the same year; which, however, did not prevent the judges from sharply criticising the legislation emanating from Parliament with their accustomed freedom of speech. In 1873 the Lord Chief Justice declared that no other act was more complicated and perplexing than the Licensing Act. The legislator must have intended something, but what it was he intended the judge was incapable of discovering. Thereupon Mr. Justice Blackburne from his commanding position began to speak, saying that he agreed with the learned Lord in the general tenor of his observations, but did not admit that the Act in question was

the most confused specimen of modern legislation ; that qualification he considered ought to be applied to the two Acts concerning the public health.

The English, however, were sensible of these defects in their legislation ; they tried the system of special commissions, but so awkwardly that the remedy did not seem applicable to the evil. John Stuart Mill suggested a specious remedy when he demanded that a permanent commission of Lords and members of Parliament should be constituted, consisting of the highest authorities, to whom it would be compulsory to refer every bill emanating from either private initiative or from the Government. All the legislation would thus pass through the same hands, every part would be placed in harmony with every other part, and a tradition created. But hitherto nothing of the kind has been attempted.

It seems as if many of these inconveniences might have been removed by the codification or consolidation of the law carried out in certain of its branches. Attempts from this point of view and to this end have more than once been made, but they have all ended in nothing, the English people being decidedly hostile to the idea. In the more recent attempts at codification or consolidation it was quite apparent that the most violent opposition was not offered by lawyers, bankers, merchants, nor even statesmen : the real obstacle was the invincible reluctance of the public. Certain political men were in every case exceptions to this rule. Lord Selborne, for instance, who gave little encouragement to a deputation from the Chamber of Commerce, soliciting the codification of the laws relating to commerce ; and again, Lord Bramwell, when the codification of the criminal law was attempted by Stephen. The principal difficulty by which enterprises of this character are met, is peculiar to England ; it originates in the prodigious copiousness, and, at the same time, the prodigious variety and incoherence of the common law, complicated by equity. The reluctance of the public is doubtless the effect of this sub-

conscious reasoning : the confusion is too great ; if you take it in hand you cannot tell whither it will lead you ; you will eliminate the needful parts ; the order you try to introduce will prove to be another kind of disorder, and a disorder of which neither the judges nor the parties concerned will be able to make head or tail. The machinery works in this way : leave us the chaos to which we are accustomed—it is the safest.

Efforts have been made, nevertheless, particularly of late years, to find a remedy for the incoherence of the law. The codifications, or rather consolidations, effected present the following characteristics : (1) They seem to be merely an improved version of the text or of existing customs, and make no attempt at the modification, systematisation, and subordination common to positive principles. (2) They seem to bear only on commercial law and administrative law. Criminal law and civil law have been carefully omitted. With regard to criminal law, a noteworthy attempt was nevertheless made by Stephen : he applied to the problem a consummate science and a mind trained in every judicial subtlety, but these advantages shrank into nothingness before the inextricable difficulties of the common law. I must dwell for a moment on this singular incident.

The history of the attempted codification of the law on homicide is very instructive ; it throws light on the structure and turn of the English mind. It too depends upon the common law. It distinguishes between murder and manslaughter ; but it only defines them indirectly in the two formulas of indictment. The essential difference in the two formulas consists in the words "malice aforethought," which is to be found in the indictment of murder and not in the indictment of manslaughter. But it so happened that the judges, when pronouncing on each case, were guided first of all by the circumstances of the case and their own feeling of equity ; and then they set to work and distorted the expression "malice aforethought" in order to make it appear compatible

with their decision. This led to a regular chaos of exceptions and qualifications, and it was never certain that a criminal act, replaced in the formula of indictment of murder, would not eventually be considered as murder and punished as such.

The method employed by Stephen was significant. A lawyer named Russell examined all the cases of homicide which, in the course of many years, had been tried in the courts of justice, probably exhausting the list. Stephen proposed to find formulas appropriate to the various cases enunciated by Russell, so that in the new code the same solution would be found which had already been given to them by the judge. He did not trouble to find out whether any of these cases were exceptional, or the solutions contradictory in principle. He made an epitome of them in spite of all his conclusions and formulas, and thus arrived at an extremely laborious, confused and subtle definition, complicated by numberless restrictions, which in its turn was nothing but chaos.

Stephen was naturally led to detail the different reasons for excuse or modification and to set them up as general rules. Now the danger of this was, that these rules might cover a large number of cases where there was in reality no room for excuse nor reason for softening the penalty, all of which goes to prove how much better it would have been to start with the unmistakable general principles which command the whole subject. Generalisation was to a certain extent exercised, on account of the use of formulas, but it was applied to individual cases, which led to the involuntary inclusion of cases that should be excluded, and the exclusion of cases that should be included. In Stephen's method there was an interior antinomy. Directly an effort is made to base all conclusions on examples and particular cases, care must be taken not to deduce from them general formulas. The sole method in harmony with this proceeding is for the judge to decide according to the analogy of the case which is submitted to him with

such other cases as he has encountered in legal precedents. He goes from particular to particular, not from general to particular.

The criticisms formulated by the Commission, especially by Lord Bramwell, were to the effect that the common law had a valuable elasticity, which would disappear, leaving nothing to compensate for its loss, if codification in rigid formulas were adopted. It is remarkable that not one single member of the Commission pointed out the real defect of the method, and freed the normal rules by generalisation applied to the codification of a subject. The chief point of these rules consists, not in finding a formula which includes every individual case furnished by jurisprudence, but in ignoring and eliminating everything which, in these individual cases, is exceptional and secondary, and in retaining in the formula only what is essential. The commission, in adopting the project, made two significant observations: (1) They declared that though in principle they had no objection to a partial codification, still they could not but perceive that a partial codification, in the sense in which it is necessary to understand the word "codification," presents more difficulties than a general codification; (2) They considered that before attempting the codification of a matter so important as criminal law, it would be necessary to prove and perfect the method in connection with less important questions. In this we see a point of view peculiar to the English mind. Now in France, on the contrary, we should say that the more important the subject the more necessary it is not to delay its judicious regulation; smaller questions could wait.

We have at last arrived at a point when we are in a position to sum up the obvious and intrinsic characteristics of the law in England. These, to a certain extent, are the reverse of what may be observed in our own country. The French law owes its authority to justice, of which, presumably, it is the expression; it aims at being reason written down. It emanates

from the one authority adjudged the most qualified to elaborate proper rules; it is a philosophic and academic piece of work. The law in England is chiefly a matter of opinion of more or less ancient date. The statutory law is but the youngest branch of a family in which jurisprudence and customs still flourish with a superior dignity, if not an equal authority. The judge-made law, the subject-made law, and the common law, with the aforesaid branch of equity, have an extraordinary amplitude and influence in England; they fill up all the interstices in parliamentary legislation.

In France, the statutory law affects a certain elevation of tone, a certain solemnity of form, and, so to speak, a serene faith in its right to be obeyed. In England, appearances are quite the reverse. The legislator seems to doubt himself; he is visibly impressed by the suspicious or absolutely relative character of his work. The French law is always imperative: it orders; it enjoins. The English law is very often optional: it suggests; it recommends a system which the citizens can use or not at their pleasure. French law is voted for an indefinite period; it is always presented as a solution. English law is often voted for a limited period; it is presented humbly on trial. A French law is complete in itself and exhausts its subject; after a miscarriage it is completely transformed, and the new text in its turn is charged with the same assurance and decisive pretensions as the old one. The statute book in England is a mosaic of little statutes, which one by one are timorously amended, first on one point, then on another, and convey the impression of being always in a provisional state. To sum up, on the one side we have a composition, conceived at a sitting, and boldly carried out; on the other, a sketch indefinitely overloaded with touchings up and "repentances." On a first inspection it may be urged that the authority, majesty and prestige which surround the law in France are not to be found in the same degree in England; and this, in fact, is what an attentive observation proves, contrary to

current opinion. There is no country where the judges, *i.e.*, the persons whose duty it is to administer the law, criticise it with more irony, or ridicule it with more humour, and that from the bench, in the presence of the litigants. There is no country where more statutes have fallen into desuetude or been set at naught by contrary practices which those in authority have given up endeavouring to repress or alter; and these are the tribunals which, thanks to a legal fiction, are censors or revisors of the law and, at the same time, accessories to the opposition of the public.

At the time of the great Parliamentary reform the publishers of newspapers and tracts intended for working men, finding themselves hampered by the increase of the stamp duty in the continuance of their useful publications, left off stamping them. They were put in prison, but their papers continued to be printed and circulated. They were sentenced to fines, but the fines were paid off by subscriptions. In four years over five hundred were deprived of their liberty, but their opposition had not diminished. Finally, Parliament gave in, and lowered the stamp duty. The illegal perseverance of a few citizens had swept away the general and fiscal motives which had inspired the legislator, and which he still considered equitable.

The reason of this is, that a law drawn up by Parliament is, in reality, nothing but a suggestion, which has more or less weight in proportion to the vehemence with which public opinion has already decided on the question, but which, absolutely compulsory as it may be in strict justice, only acquires and maintains its moral authority by acquiescence in the inclinations and opinion of the public. Those to whom the law is displeasing feel themselves at liberty to combat it by the method commonly opposed to undesirable customs, viz., the negation by contrary practice of the precept on which it is based. Such conduct does not necessarily disturb the consciences of political men; on the contrary, it makes them

first attentive, then uneasy, and finally often complaisant to the breach of legality which has opened their eyes to the rights of the case. Recently the *Saturday Review* complained that the remarkable number of cases in which the law had been violated had been cited as an argument against the Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill (which, at the time, there was a question of modifying). The argument criticised was perfectly in accordance with the entirely practical idea the English have formed of the law. Reason and justice, considered in themselves are not the venerated source of the law ; rather is it the energetic and persevering action : indirect sign and evidence of their presence.

Moreover, there have never been wanting in England thinkers, who are ready to call those who systematically violate the law good servants to the public. They take an honourable and prearranged part in the work of legislation, and form a counterpoise to the political men who systematically uphold unwise laws because they are unable to foresee whither a first reform, no matter how humble and moderate, will lead them.

Honour to those who, like Wallace, from pure love of justice have put on the uniform of transgressors of the law. The doctrine that the laws must be obeyed, even the bad ones, and no matter to what extent they may have been modified or abrogated, should be accepted with great reservations. Some of the most salutary reforms in the history of England were brought about by opposition to bad laws, and it is certain that without such opposition they would never have been effected, or would have been effected too late to cure the evil. It was by a flagrant violation of the law that O'Connell and the electors of the county of Clare brought about the Catholic emancipation. It was the verdicts returned by humane juries, despite their oaths, which led to the abolition of the atrocious penal laws which disgraced the statute book fifty years ago. Lawyers, merchants, and landlords successfully combated this reform for a long time. "The learned judges," said Chief

Justice Ellenborough in the House of Lords, "are unanimous in their opinion that justice and the public safety require that the death penalty should not be remitted in cases which come under this section of the communal law (*i.e.*, the theft of an article exceeding the value of forty shillings). If we suffer this Bill to pass we shall not know where we are, and whether we are standing on our heads or our heels."[1]

[1] Sir James Mackintosh.

CHAPTER V

ROYALTY

It has been said, with as much accuracy as there can be in so general a statement, that England is in reality a republic wearing the semblance and invested with the forms of a monarchy. What substance is there in this semblance and these forms? What degree of consistency and tenacity, what probable stability do they contain? What services do they still render, what can they set against the growing need of returning to fact, and harmonising appearances with actuality? These are delicate questions, which resolve themselves into the question of what hold royalty still has upon the masses? The civilian and the statesman receive their word of command from the "man in the street." In a community which is becoming more and more democratic, the judicial and political conception of the crown cannot continue to differ essentially from the popular conception. Its tendency is to become but a more educated expression of the same idea. The future of the monarchic institution depends on the extent to which it responds to the requirements of the imagination, the bias of the feelings, the method and operation of the mind, the individual conception and the hereditary instincts of the nameless crowd.

Monarchy has one very considerable advantage over all other political systems: it is the form of government which is most intelligible to the masses, the only one that is visible. It conveys to those who think only through sensations—and

their number is still very large—a direct and simple demonstration of authority. That a House comprised of six hundred and seventy members is the effective legislative force in a country, the sovereign author of every general precept which each person must obey, is a complex, oblique, and artificial idea, calculated to disturb and disconcert minds which are not trained in analysis. If they obtained their conception of "the law" from it alone, they might regard Parliament as the outward presentment and embodiment of supreme power, with the requisite tone, accent, and perhaps gesture of command, but for them it would never possess the great soul of authority, that inexplicable essence before which the individual will is instinctively prostrated. What an exercise of the faculty of abstraction is required in order to comprehend that after a debate which, whether viewed from a distance or close at hand, seems the acme of confusion, a surplus of votes thrown into an urn, or of persons passing through a door, can produce an *order*, *i.e.*, a thing complete in itself, homogeneous, categorical, decisive, conquering, arrogant, which claims nothing less than the right to deprive each man of self-government, and forces upon him the sacrifice of his preferences! What a superabundance of vigour is required for such a victory, proceeding from an abstract operation of addition and subtraction, after a vote as hazardous as a throw of the dice! It is indeed a paradox. On the other hand, no exercise of the faculty of abstraction is necessary in order to understand that such an *order* can proceed, resounding and irresistible, from the mouth of a single individual. With a considerable majority of the English people, especially the two millions of new rural electors, the fact of a vote in an assembly does not enter into, nor become part of, their ordinary conception of the law, which they picture to themselves, either after the manner of their ancestors, as a custom valuable from the force of habit, and the mystery of remote origins, or as the personal and present will of the sovereign.

What has just been said of the legislator can with still greater reason be said of the executive. Kings readily call themselves the fathers of their people; and whether they are or not, it is unquestionable that the monarchic institution was originally copied from paternal authority, *i.e.*, from a model with which every man is acquainted in infancy and many realise afterwards on their own account. It is enough for each citizen to look at himself in the midst of his belongings in order to form, not a precise idea, but some idea of monarchic organisation. Parliamentary government has no prototype so well known and familiar to all those from whom it claims submission. Bagshott made the very apposite remark that when Louis Napoleon invited the French to choose between him and the Assembly, it was as if he had given them the choice, not only between dictatorship and liberty, but between the clear and the obscure, the certain and the nameless, between a government and an interregnum or vacuum. They could imagine a Bonaparte on horseback, stretching out his hand, and raising his voice in command. The Assembly, if they imagined it at all, must have appeared to them like a concourse or crowd, such as they themselves often made in the streets, from which nothing proceeded but confused clamourings and meaningless directions. Observe, too, that in England royalty retains the semblance of supreme authority, though its power is no longer absolute. The observances with which the royal person is surrounded, the mode of speech adopted in addressing him, the pompous dress or military uniform worn in his presence, all help to make him the living image of authority, obedience to whom is to a certain extent the first impulse. On the other hand, obedience to the President of a Republic, or the President of a Council, must of necessity be deliberate, and supported by reason, he being practically on a level with his ministers and the Assembly itself. The labourer or the rustic from the fields lets his eyes wander over the black-coated figures without clearly distin-

guishing which is the leader. Even now many English peasants cannot conceive of any effective power except that of the King; in their eyes Parliament is only an assembly of delegates whose duties are to bring complaints to the foot of the throne, and control the public expenditure, the ministers being mere councillors and agents of the Crown. It would be useless to try and make these *naïf* interpreters of the Constitution understand that the effective power is entirely in the hands of Parliament and the Cabinet. Similarly, what the educated gentleman calls public order sanctioned by law is even now to many a labourer in the country the "King's peace." To correct his formula on this subject would not rectify the idea he has formed of the thing he endeavours to express, but merely obscure it—in other words, set it at naught; for he is not able to grasp it more precisely or correctly.

This powerful basis for the monarchic institution naturally becomes undermined and weakened in proportion as minds learn to exercise themselves, to shake off their limitations, and to make use of the faculty of abstraction. The more parliamentary mechanism is illuminated by the progress of education and reason, the more royalty is thrown into the shade. A singular circumstance must be noted in this connection. Societies and meetings, of which there are a far greater number in England than elsewhere, are like so many copies of Parliament, and explain its operations in some sort of fashion by a daily demonstration. Gradually the confusion ceases, the various parts of the machinery become distinct, and the complicated apparatus is in its turn an object for representation, an image. The Englishman is like a man who, by a daily study of a miniature steam-engine, at length becomes acquainted with all its parts, pictures them in motion and comprehends its power. When Homer, in saying that the Cyclops had no assemblies, by his astonishment betrayed the strength of the need and custom of meeting together among the Hellenic races, he tacitly limited the future and fortune of

the royal power in Greece and unconsciously predicted the republican transformation of its system of government. Similarly it may be said that each fresh society, each new meeting since 1769, the date of the first public assembly, has helped to render the monarchic fiction superfluous, and to lead up to its abandonment, because parliamentary government is thereby simplified to the mind, and the reality, at first unintelligible and disturbing, which is hidden behind the throne, becomes familiarised and more surely imaginable.

Happily for the English monarchy it has some psychological supports which are less easily shaken and more permanent. I have explained elsewhere the reasons why, in a nation eager for action, the majority is relatively exempt from envy in regard to the upper classes. Effort being in itself a good thing, the inequalities of condition which condemn the bulk of the people to effort, partly lose their irritating effect; the impression they produce has no bitterness; consequently they are nothing more than the source of an interesting variety in the picture society presents before the eyes of each individual. The Frenchman cannot think of his superiors for any length of time without returning to himself; a proceeding which often results in spite and anger. The person and conduct of the local squire, great noble, or prince has a great and impersonal interest for the Englishman, just in the same way as a theatrical representation. The bitterness of envy being left out of the question, the hearts and minds of the vulgar are free to be devoted to the performance of the various actors, from which they extract amusement at little expense; it forms a soothing recreation after days of incessant hard work, and satisfies the commonplace curiosity and rather insipid sentimentality of the nation. This has never been so obvious as in the last reign. The sex of the sovereign, which naturally diminished the import of her public acts, did not perceptibly diminish the interest which the most insignificant details of her private life excited. Above the world of politics and

business, with its arid atmosphere and dim, grey light, it is delightful to catch sight of a splendour of magnificence, a feast for the eyes ; but it is even more delightful to find at such an altitude, a real romance, the introduction to a great "family picture." "Madam," said Lord Melbourne to Queen Victoria, "do you know why your marriage has produced such an impression of radiant felicity ? Because it is evidently a very different thing to a mere affair of State." The Queen responded to this sentiment with touching confidence, when, after her trip to Scotland with Prince Albert, she published the diary which was so void of interest and infantile in art, but succeeded on account of its very simplicity. In the times of the constitutional monarchy in France no one would have ventured to print such a book, any more than the *Cruise of the "Bacchante,"* in 1886, which was an account of the journey the two sons of the Prince of Wales had just taken throughout the British Empire. The princes observed, took notes, and listened to pedantic explanations from the mouths of their preceptors, which were conscientiously reproduced in the text ; at Haiti they bought parallel bars for gymnastics ; they went in for steeplechases at Gibraltar . . . The reader is spared nothing. The publication of this wearisome *pot-pourri* is evidence of the value which in England rank and title lend to the smallest detail in the life of a prince. The English narrator confidently reckoned on arousing interest and wrote down everything ; whereas a Frenchman at the very first word would have had a presentiment of ridicule and given up all idea of the work.

Another disposition of mind, which is peculiar to the English, helps to preserve the monarchy. The taste for philosophy is extremely rare and limited among the English. Generalisation pushed to extremes causes them a sort of uneasiness ; they prefer ideas of average compass, accepting them as first and indissoluble elements. Naturally this precludes any equalised conception of society. The peoples inspired by the true spirit

of equality are those who, when confronted by the varied elements that go to make up a political nation, untiringly analyse and separate them, never satisfied until they have arrived at that simplest element of all, the individual. The intermediary groups and agglomerations left by history do not stop, hardly delay them ; they press eagerly forward. Only the individual is in accord with Nature. When the limit of the operation has been reached the human molecule stands alone, in its identity, among the millions of copies reproducing it. Equality is the essential law of a society in which the thinker places the synthesis at the end, among the results of the most careful analysis. It is perfectly evident that, on so level a surface, there can be no place particularly designed by nature, and effectively sheltered, for the throne. If royalty exists at all it appears isolated and exposed, there is nothing to proclaim its existence nor surround it with observances.

The English have neither the desire nor the curiosity to penetrate so deeply ; they would learn how to reach the very source of vital force in the social body they probe, if they were not so careful in the handling of the scalpel ; but they fear lest their dissection should result in a corpse if they push it as far as the primordial cell. It is one of the most significant traits of their political generalisations that the individual has but recently begun to figure in them, even in a small degree. They consider the individual as an element, not *natural*, but *artificial* ; not as a result of a precise analysis, but as the residuum of an exaggerated disintegration. The society they picture to themselves is not an agglomeration of human persons, but a system of superposed classes, and juxtaposed corporations. Classes and corporations are, or have for a long time been, the extreme and indivisible terms of their analysis. These terms, furnished by history, have been perpetuated just as they are by a vigorous practical philosophy, without any examination of their substance. A feeble speculative philosophy without breadth or exigencies, has not thought of demanding

a more profound investigation. The nation has therefore been apprehended as a vast hierarchy rising like a pyramid, of which the King is the apex. Royalty is merely the most elevated in dignity of the corporations[1] which, taken in the aggregate, make up the political world ; it is an essential part of a living whole, sustained by its bulk and justified by its continuance ; it participates in the stability of the entire system, and, like it, appears to be "in accord with nature" ; it shares the great esteem and general belief that is bestowed upon this work of the centuries. There is the same difference between our monarchy of July and the monarchy or Queen Victoria, so analogous in many respects, as there is between the capital of a column which rises, slender and alone, from the emptiness of a horizontal platform, and the immovable summit of a mountain, which in endless undulations of lesser chains and little hills, extends to the very horizon, before the plain begins.

There is another principle of life and tenacity proceeding from the same cause : in England, royalty is not only part of a vast whole, but part—in fact, the beginning, of a series, the first link in a long chronological chain, the point of departure and basis of national history. France no longer experiences this impression of continuity ; she is unconscious of any such necessity. The present moment, which is already an abstraction, is still further stripped by our rationalist politicians, who separate it from everything that indicates its place in the series ; they pretend to nothing less than to issue from time and to enter the absolute. The Englishman does not consider that truth should be sought outside reality and life. He does not endeavour to subtilise this abstraction of the present moment still further, but to give it weight, body and substance, by

[1] It is well known that the word "corporation" in English means, not only the social entity formed by the combination of several persons living at the same moment, but also that which is formed by a series of individuals, succeeding one another, as, for example, in the life interest of a benefice.

attaching to it as extended a past as he is able to conceive. Incapable of widening his horizon by philosophical generalisation, he enlarges it by a sort of historical generalisation. He demands from the indefinitude of the centuries the majesty that we demand from the abstract indefinitude of our conceptions.

This mode of thought forms an almost impregnable support for the monarchic system. Under such conditions royalty is not only an element in a complex yet comprehensive system, but the most ancient element of that system, the emblem of its antiquity and continuity. It is the centre and core of the political constitution, the whole of which nominally proceeds from it, and thereon it affixes the seal of the past, extending the magic of its immemoriality over the institutions that are the latest of its offshoots, and even over the liberties that have been snatched from its grasp. The English, in their passion for antedating whatever they intend to hold up to respect, continually bring forward this venerable evidence, whether or no they have documents to support it; as ally or adversary they insist on its taking an active part in all their struggles and a share in all their contracts, deeming it a stronger evidence of antiquity than the strips of parchment on which their claims are based. It is by a vain and hollow fiction that the monarchic party in France represent the throne as the guarantee of public liberties; engendered as they are by reason and abstract justice, such dependence on its protection is violently repudiated. In England, royalty and liberties issued together from the shades of history and thenceforward have marched side by side; so long has been the journey which has riveted their union and, in a certain sense blended their images in a vague and traditional memory, that the question of separating one from the other has never arisen.

Royalty is not only the image of authority, but the author and symbol of national unity. Without it, in the past, the incongruous elements of which the nation is composed could

never have mingled one with the other ; and those which have not yet been absorbed and resist absorption would disaggregate. Parliament, in its hour, and to the extent of its ability, has contributed to the unity of the English people ; but it could not have consolidated it single-handed. Even now the bulk would suffer disruption, and entire sections become detached, if Parliament alone occupied the province of supreme power. This is easy of comprehension. In an assembly which is the highest visible authority, everything is decided by the majority of votes. A province, or colony, the representatives of which found themselves in the minority in the sovereign house, owing to the adverse agreement of the remaining members on a question of vital interest, would be in the condition of a people subjected to the worst, most humiliating and intolerable of tyrannies, that of another people ; they would experience the sensations of a conquered race which no longer belonged to itself, and was governed by its conquerors. Royalty more or less conceals this oppression. Those who are sacrificed accept their part in the sacrifice with greater willingness, and their opposition is not so liable to degenerate into secession, when it is made easy for them to believe that they have to do with a single man, their own traditional sovereign, a master who is also the master of their adversaries. They bow, but not in despair, and stand erect again, uninspired by inexpiable hatred, before the will which to-day oppresses them, but to-morrow will oppress others, and perhaps protect them. Parliamentary oppression, confronted in its actuality, does not allow them the resource of such illusions ; it is servitude without cloak or euphemism—systematic, implacable despotism.

It is more than probable that if the North American colonies had had grievances only against a king, violator of the charters granted by himself, the most vigorous and legalised opposition would not have degenerated into national war, nor the disturbances have assumed the aspect of a revolution. But by the

side of the King they saw Parliament, representing a people to whom each generation as it passed made them more remote; behind Parliament they imagined they could hear even the scum of this nation saying with a swagger, "Our American subjects," and glorying in the fact that they were a people who could be taxed at will. It was this which rendered grievances, in substance light, insupportable to three millions of men, material ready made for a nation; grievances which, if they had been attributable to the prince alone, would, in all probability, have provoked mere irritation and momentary violence. They saw no option but to fight, disputing the ground step by step; they would not accept another day of bondage. As a matter of fact, the unconcealed and too plainly irresistible preponderance of the House of Commons in the Government was, without any shadow of doubt, one of the causes which rendered the gradual emancipation of the great North American, South African, and Australian colonies inevitable. Under the acknowledged sovereignty of a British parliament the dependence of nation on nation became too apparent and galling; the bonds had to be loosened. On the other hand, it was, thanks to the authority—though purely official and formal—preserved by the Crown, that the remnant of this dependence was accepted by some self-assertive populations, who, becoming from day to day more definitely separated from the mother country by their interests and customs, began to form new races and found a distinct nationality. Without this kind of dynastic union, which waived their scruples and saved their dignity, their grievances would have been too blatant and schism inevitable. They agreed philosophically that the choice of their governor and the refusal of laws voted by their individual parliaments should be nominally in the hands of the King; if, in appearance as in reality, they had been under the dominion of the British Parliament neither Canada, the Cape, nor Australia would have borne their yoke with patience.

In short, it may be said that in a country like the British

Empire, where so many incongruous elements are in juxtaposition, the pure parliamentary system without a king, or with a king in name only—in other words, government by a Convention—could only have led to a series of tense and patent struggles, which, in the beginning, would have hindered the consolidation of unity, and later on would have rendered it altogether impossible, if the more or less approved expedient of a purely dynastic bond had not been adopted. The presence of the King, and the authority he still retains under the wing of Imperial Parliament, has often robbed contests of the inexpiable character of a struggle of people with people, a sort of struggle for life. Royalty, which in the beginning afforded leisure for the reproduction and consolidation of moral and political homogeneity, even now, by means of the fictions of which it is the basis, delays the moment when the unabsorbed and inharmonious elements shall make their secession. Every Englishman who proudly surveys the immensity of the British Empire feels that royalty largely contributes to the equilibrium of this extraordinary fabric, and the feeling awakens a vague consciousness of his debt to this institution in the past. The monarchic form is like an old-established and respected firm, which in no way incommodes its partners, who, by reason of its inoffensive prestige, are deterred from urging a speedy liquidation. The day on which the official government of England becomes republican will be closely followed by one on which Canada, the Cape, and the Australian states will proclaim their complete autonomy, and Scotland, and perhaps Wales, will demand a federation on the basis of equality, even as Ireland has done.

Finally, the throne, judged from the religious standpoint, is the symbol of national independence. The English, morally as well as geographically, are insular. They have a dislike and natural distrust for the foreigner; he is their enemy; they suspect him. If this outlaw, under the fire of hostile glances, interferes in their affairs, arrogates their rights, and

claims a share in the sovereignty of their territory, they are more seriously angry and resist the attempt with greater energy than any other nation. The interference of the Court of Rome has never been more resented. The prodigious success of the ecclesiastical schism brought about by Henry VIII. was largely due to the fact that he gave the English a national God, a Church of their own, a Pope to themselves, and a king with no visible superior. Anglicanism had not then assumed an individually dogmatic character; it was only distinguishable from Catholicism at one point—viz., that the prince occupied the place of the sovereign pontiff. Jealous guardians of their private liberties though they were, the English people forgot them for the moment in the immense satisfaction of being no longer dependent on any person outside their own frontiers. It concealed from them, or at least appeared a sufficient compensation for the evils of a revolution resulting from the elevation and illimitable extension of the royal power. The care with which the second of the Tudors caused the "imperial" character of the throne of England to be twice proclaimed, thereby asserting his equality with any foreign potentate whatsoever, clearly indicated the goal towards which the chief of the new Church was at once urged and followed by the whole nation. Schism could have had no greater encouragement. It responded to the passion for national autonomy with which every Englishman was at the time possessed. Later on, less for its own sake than on account of its eligibility as a protection against the common enemy, Calvinism was introduced into a constitution which was not ready to receive it. Religious feeling began to develop with undeniable sincerity and ardour; but in the revival of dogmatic interest the interests of the State were not lost sight of, for had it not set the ball rolling? The act of national emancipation, essentially political as it was, never forfeited its place in the public esteem. It was to the English what the Declaration of Independence has been to the

Americans since 1776. The fervour of feeling it awakened has known no abatement, and its strength and tenacity saved the position in the Revolution of 1534, when religious belief was at its lowest ebb.

All the force and prestige royalty owed, and continues to owe to this conception is plainly evident. For the King to be spiritual head of the Church was an assurance that the abhorred pretensions of the See of Rome would not be revived; the position filled was a more certain guarantee than the position vacant. If the throne disappeared what would become of the Episcopal Church left to itself? Who can tell? An irresistible gravitation might perhaps restore it to its traditional centre. The Oxford Movement, that of Pusey and Newman, seemed evidence in this direction. Sombre and terrifying is the dream. The throne is like a counterpoise which drags this great moral force in the opposite direction, or a centre of attraction which retains it within the orbit of national life.

At the present juncture this powerful interest seems on the wane. Tolerance reigns supreme in every British law; no official position is closed to Dissenters; Parliament is composed of men belonging to every creed; Jew and atheists elbow each other without offence at the promiscuity, and, finally, the Church of Ireland has quite recently been disestablished—all these are signs that the question no longer holds the same position in the political world, nor arouses the same apprehensions as it used to do; that the public mind no longer requires the same reassurance of "royal supremacy," symbol and surety of independence, wherewith to face the See of Rome. If ever the State policy, in which the Revolution or 1534 originated, loses its last hold on public opinion, if the actual decline of faith, or the development of independent sects, causes the idea to prevail that the change of front of a Church in decline would not be without precedent—and this scornful conviction would assure to the nation, under another form the political security she prizes so highly—royalty would lose

much of the extraordinary esteem, power, and influence it has enjoyed for three centuries in its theocratic *rôle* as guarantee of the imperial autonomy so dear to every British subject ; and one of the chief pillars of the monarchic institution would give way.

PART V

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE STATE

CHAPTER I

THE INDIVIDUAL AND HIS FUNCTION IN THE STATE

LOOKING at the English political world from a distance, the eye is irresistibly attracted to the two poles which occupy the extreme points. On the one side, is the enormous body of public authorities with their agencies, delegations, and subdivisions, the whole designated by a single collective title—the State. On the other, is the individual, first with the appendages which are merely an extension, or, as it were, excrescence of himself, and afterwards in the groups which he helps to form for the purpose of augmenting his forces and making the utmost use of his energy. What are the surface characteristics, fundamental nature, and actual essence of these two great factors? In what light does each regard itself and the other? What respective domains do they occupy? In what directions and with what circumlocutions do they alter their boundaries? These are the questions I propose to discuss. They only partially touch on constitutional law, but constitutional law in its entirety is affected by the solution of these questions.

It is not easy to arrive at a solution. England's transformation is rapid. To give an exact sketch of this little world in the process of evolution is as difficult as to photograph a troop advancing at a run, and not only advancing, but wheeling round without stopping or breaking line until it has almost faced about. On the outside the order is

unchanged, while the inner files gradually make a half turn and begin to march in another direction. The complexity of this double movement would make any simple description unintelligible ; we must analyse it and represent it by two distinct images. The most reliable method is to begin by depicting the characteristics, situations, and relations resulting from general, potent, and established facts, which were still in the ascendency less than half a century ago. Afterwards we can point out which of these facts have been more or less undermined, overturned and disturbed, and ascertain the direct or indirect effects of the work of dislocation. The effects are generally slower and more interrupted than would have been expected from such strong dissolvent forces. An influence which has long been exerted under the action of a powerful cause, is maintained by force of habit long after the cause has lost its vigour and virtue. On the other hand, our logic is too anxious to sum up the inevitable consequences contained in a new situation. The fruit will come out of the flower, and the flower out of the bud ; but our imagination peeps into the bud, and plucks the fruit before the right time has come, judging it to be already ripe. It must have time to ripen.

I.—*The Individual.*

In a methodical study the individual comes first.

Other nations resign themselves to action for the sake of the credit attaching to it, the repose following it, or the enjoyments procured by it ; but the English love action for its own sake. This is evident to any attentive observer who has spent a little time in the country. The best proof of it is furnished by the classes who control their own destinies. I mean those whom an hereditary opulence renders independent of labour. Averse to indolence, they allow no relaxation to their bodies. Cricket, yachting, rowing, shooting, lawn tennis and riding, occupy the greater

part of their time. Hunting has an equal charm for them, and when the season comes public affairs have little chance of competing with grouse shooting. Games of football and the Oxford and Cambridge regattas are no mere diversions for lads; the Derby is not simply an amusement for the unoccupied and frivolous; it is a national solemnity in which all England is interested; the Olympian games in miniature. Articles devoted to sport occupy a disproportionate space in English newspapers. The London journals confine themselves to ten or twelve columns a week against twenty-five or thirty occupied by leading articles; but even this would seem excessive to French readers. The provincial papers far exceed this proportion: *The Scotsman* devotes forty-five columns to sport, while the leading articles only occupy forty-seven. The English gentleman eagerly devours this literature. Outside sport, which consumes a large portion of the leisure of the upper classes, we find a gentleman, in London or the country, expending a superfluity of energy in the nobler branches of human activity. In the House of Commons able members are not content with the work of Parliamentary sittings. A large portion of the day, while the Ministers are superintending the despatch of affairs, they sit on committees, debating a host of minor questions of detail concerning local legislation. In the evening ministers and members meet together and discuss subjects of general interest with lucidity until midnight. No one, until quite recently, ever seriously complained that the burden was too heavy for him, and demanded for mundane diversions or slumber the hours that in other countries were not claimed by politics. In provincial England there is not a single personage of any standing but willingly devotes much of his time and thought to the affairs of the parish, the district, or the county, and yet fails to attend the meetings of a large number of voluntary associations. While he, of his own free will, undertakes these labours, one of his sons is

perhaps in Australia or Manitoba, leading the hard life of a shepherd on the borders of civilisation; and another is a missionary at the Cape—his life as a shepherd of men being no less toilsome than that of his brother.

I have now made plainly evident the imperious need for movement and action which dominates the English nation from one end of the world to the other. When we witness their extravagant expenditure of force in every direction, with or without personal or public profit, we cannot doubt that it is the outcome of some profound and invincible temperamental necessity, traces of which must be obvious in the political customs and tendencies of the nation.

If we consider this microcosm perpetually revolving in the centre of a circle of other bodies: the relations established between it and them: the personality of the individual, extended by his family, and fortified by riches, as exemplified in the classes into which the citizens are divided: we shall see at what points the individual comes into close contact with the State.

2.—*Personal Liberty.*

The general of an army before he advances, assures himself that he has control of his base of operations. Man only acts with decision, vigour, and perseverance when the free disposition of his body and the free use of his own property are assured to him. This condition is an essential preliminary: to provide it is the business of public authorities. But the Government can turn against their object the means of action which have been granted to them for its attainment. The Englishman has always foreseen and feared this perversion. His disposition to fear and avert it has been strengthened from the very beginning by historical causes which date back to the Norman Conquest.

The power of the State in England was, at an early date, incorporated in a prince, who was invested with immense

power and inclined to all the excesses of a despot. The first necessity, therefore was to be protected against him. British law bears traces in all its branches of this primitive fear and defiance. Parliament forms a protection for the individual against the Crown—the judges against Parliament and its officials—and the jury against the judges. Parliamentary procedure, over-zealous in protecting the rights of the members—judicial procedure, over-zealous in the defence of the accused, are the outcome of a belief that the means of intimidation and corruption at the disposition of supreme power are immense; that every official appointed to share in the control of supreme power is liable to become its accomplice; that the interest of supreme power is, in the immense majority of cases, in opposition to the interest of the citizen; that in every case supreme power is tempted to oppress some citizens at the instigation of others, and that no precaution should be neglected to ensure protection against so formidable and perverse a neighbour. The English never willingly call upon the State to assure fair play between individuals. They always have a fear lest its protection should degenerate into oppression; as a rule they prefer to run the risk of an unequal struggle with private individuals on a level with themselves, rather than summon an ally or even a judge from the camp which might assume the mastery over both themselves and their opponents. If there were no worse evil than to be constrained by a higher power to act contrary to one's own wishes or intentions, the State, most powerful among powers, most irresistible by reason of its prestige and habit of command, the great names of those it represents, and the public welfare of which it is the organ, is assuredly the most to be dreaded.

The protection of person and property against the Government assured to the individual is civil liberty. The English in very early days coveted, seized, planted and firmly rooted it in the common law. Up to the present century other

liberties were protected in England much as they are elsewhere, and it is by the protection and help it secured to the individual for the safe keeping of his person and his goods that the common law has been distinguished from time immemorial from the laws and customs of the Continent. As a general rule the subject was entrusted to the arbitration of supreme power. It was decreed in England in the thirteenth century that (1) no one could be taxed except by the vote of the representatives of the nation; (2) arrested, except on a warrant from a duly qualified magistrate; (3) deprived of his property and imprisoned except after sentence by a competent tribunal in accordance with the verdict of the jury; (4) detained without trial for an offence if he offered to furnish bail, or for a crime after a certain lapse of time. Between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries the nation never lost an opportunity of reasserting and acting upon these principles, and vehemently insisting that they should be acknowledged and confirmed by the authorities; afterwards in a moment of laxness they were allowed to drop. Taxation by vote finally disappeared with Charles I.; monopolies, a form of indirect taxation, were proscribed by law under James I., and no effort was made to revive them. The only opening for arbitrary arrest was closed when it was recognised that the warrants must name the persons to be seized, and specify the motives for the act of constraint. The two laws of "habeas corpus" (31 Ch. II. ch. 2, and 56 Geo. III. c. 100) likewise set aside anything which could justify or facilitate arbitrary detention. Criminal suits were planned essentially on the assumption that they conceal an attempt on the part of the strong and the knavish to persecute the innocent and the weak. The accused is treated with a half-tender indulgence, and all the machinery of the law is put into motion on his behalf; it is the accuser who would seem to be the culprit, to such an extent is he hurried, vexed, circumvented, harassed, and threatened with all the penalties of perjury. It was necessary

that the judge, administrator of all these indemnifications, should be upright, independent of circumstances, and free in relation to the supreme power; the Bill of Rights proscribed the setting aside of a law in any case whatsoever, and the Act of Establishment confirmed the irremovability of the magistrates in the higher Courts.[1] In spite of this the judge appointed by the Crown, being a State personage is suspected, and a jury of a dozen individuals now pronounce on the case and on the title of the case.[2] As even in such case corruption might procure a certain deference to power, unanimity has been made an essential of each verdict. One patriotic juror is enough to baffle the intrigues of an oppressive Government. It is a sort of judicial *liberum veto*. Finally, no privileged jurisdiction is admitted for the official nor for the administrative act; neither are covered by the order of a superior. The administrative act comes within the cognisance of the ordinary courts, and the official is under their jurisdiction. The State itself is on a level with him in their pretorium, and like him is justiceable. The whole system is upheld and inspired by the same spirit, which has not flagged for one day in the course of centuries. The members of our Constituent Assembly of 1789 were justly reproached with having based their political system on a resolution of distrust of the supreme power; the English founded their whole administrative and judicial system on a similar resolution.

As a matter of fact, these fundamental indemnifications were not much good except to rich and leisured persons. Ordinary judges were few in number, and jurisdictions of appeal remote. The expenses of justice attained enormous figures. Poor people

[1] Irremovability was not enough. There should be no temptation in the way of advancement or promotion. It is now the general rule, to which there have been few exceptions, that once appointed they are not removed.

[2] This second prerogative, disputed in affairs of the press, was confirmed in 1792 by an Act which claimed to be a simple declaration of an immemorial right.

had no means of paying them ; they were obliged to forego justice in order to escape a ruin worse than the individual violence, or partial despoliation of which they were the victims. All administrative policy and local justice were in the hands of the great landed proprietors ; they exercised it uncontrolled. Even in the present day it is pervaded with a certain arbitrariness. Nevertheless, protection was sufficiently extended to cover all the classes whose voice is heard in history, and it largely contributed to the maintenance of a strong public feeling, which imbued the authorities and every class down to the very outcasts, with the illusion, desire for and pride of English liberty.

The guarantees of personal liberty and property in England give occasion for a last remark. The feeling they inspire is stronger in that country than elsewhere, because its force and impetus are derived from two well-springs whose waters rarely mingle—revolution and tradition. On the Continent the same guarantees, in the imperfect degree in which they existed under the old system of government, were based on precedents preserved in some local custom or judicial jurisprudence ; no resounding voice proclaimed them to the world. Sometimes they were the result of a royal *motu proprio*, which could be withdrawn or modified at any time by the prince or his successors. Mandatories, accredited by the entire nation, did not formulate them sword in hand, register them in contract form, and set them down in inviolable ordinances. Every effort of the States General in this direction proved miserably abortive. The English, by a singular chance, ever since the thirteenth century, had been in possession of a solemn Declaration of Rights, formulated by the representatives of the nation, and accepted, or rather tacitly countenanced, by the Crown. This they renewed and completed in 1627 and 1688, after which it passed into the common law, transferred red hot from the revolutionary melting-pot, and receiving the indelible impression of the new

mould. Round this impression feebler traditions crystallised without disguising it; the course of time perpetuated without impairing the strength of the design received at its origin. The common law, properly speaking, contains no trace of this design. It is enshrined in custom, not a part of it; a Vulcanian rock lost in a Neptunian sea. Under the uniform patina of the centuries a powerful alloy can be recognised, the fusion of which was once the national work *par excellence*. No other part of the common law rings with the same sound as these four or five great maxims; and that they have penetrated deep into the English heart and become one, as it were, with the public honour, is because revolution still vibrates under tradition. The long toil and labour which go to the formation of custom would not have sufficed to thus set free and exalt it.

On the other hand, these maxims were destined to become customs. To-day each bears witness to the accumulatory power of heredity. In France, liberty was the birth of yesterday; it is a doctrine, but not only a doctrine. It has all the excitement of novelty, and, moreover, the vibrating sonorousness and faculty of expansion which are characteristic of abstract formulas. But it has not had time to reach and rally the obscure and secret forces of our nature. The French for centuries were accustomed to seek refuge from a despotism, merciless, near at hand, and arbitrary, in a despotism gentler, more remote and more methodical. They escaped from a feudal sovereign only to fall into the clutches of royalty. It was still despotism, changed in nothing except form, degree, and exercise. In the progress from the worse to the lesser evil no feeling of resentment was connected even with the principle of liberty; the principle was not as yet involved. Besides, our instincts are not forearmed against despotism; but the judgment and passions it calls into play violently rebel against servitude; a revolt that does not date back further than the eighteenth century. The fundamental

nature of man, his spontaneous inclination, or what might be called his unconscious and involuntary mind, rather tend to appeal to, and desire the protection of the State.

In England, the State is confronted by some individuals who, from time immemorial and from father to son, have been accustomed to think and repeat that their person, their purse, and their house are inviolable, and chiefly threatened by the State; that they must keep a close watch upon it, and arm themselves against it. Person, purse, and house are to every English subject three fortresses which must not be approached without an authorisation from himself or his fellows. This develops a certain trait in his character, which becomes slowly accentuated, intensified, and solidified from generation to generation. The instinctive resistance it offers to pressure from without has none of the irregularities and interruptions of calculated and deliberate resistance. It is like the difference between the compact and solid bone which maintains its position, and the strained muscle which may weary and relax. The slow operation of time has thus procured for the English subject an advantage over the Frenchman in their respective struggles with the State. In the case of both nations liberty has won a brilliant victory, more recent in the one, in the other more ancient, but ever present in the minds of the masses, as their revolutionary records prove. Further, the influence of a long past has intensified the Englishman's instincts, and affected even the "unconscious" depths of his nature. The horror of servitude is firmly implanted in his temperament. His need of independence, like the spring of a native and spontaneous passion, sets him going on occasion. All the forces of heredity struggle in him and for him against the despotism of the State.

3.—*Political Liberties.*

It is not enough to wring from authority a promise to respect civil liberty; it must be guaranteed by methods the operation

of which is more regular and peaceful than a revolution, and less exhausting for the community. This is the object of political liberties. I place under this head, first, the right of association and assembly and the liberty of the Press; and, second, a national representation founded on a widely extended electoral franchise. Through the medium of meetings, grievances take shape, and begin to assume a collective character. Through the medium of the Press, the voice of the orator, and the dumb thought of the philosopher, penetrate to the extreme limits of the country, sowing everywhere identical convictions and concordant desires. By means of association, these desires become united and summarised, and an exact impression of their force is obtained. Finally, the representative system obtains them admittance to the sphere of authority and activity in the government.

Between the last mentioned of these liberties and the others, several marked distinctions may be noted. I will not, however, dwell on them now, but will limit myself to two remarks which bear directly on my subject. The first is, that the right of association and assembly and the liberty of the press have always been regarded in England, not as political liberties, but as civil liberties. They have never been included with the right of suffrage in the difficult problem, overloaded with words and often irrelevant, the object of which is to establish a good system of government. They have never been raised to the dangerous dignity of constitutional prerogatives; but have been left in the position of purely private rights. They have always been regarded as corollaries contained in the fundamental *postulat* of personal liberty from which they have become separated. The right of assembly proceeds directly from the right every man has to come, go, or stay where he likes. The right of association is simply a development of the right to enter into contracts. The liberty of the Press is a particular example of the liberty to think and speak. There is no occasion to grant these rights expressly, nor to

define them; they are tacitly implied. The series of statute books have nothing to show in any way resembling our innumerable laws on these important matters; not one of the English declarations of law contain any mention of them. The question is understood as settled in advance; its perfectly simple solution is implied in the principle of the liberty of the subject, and the most elementary logic will suffice for its deduction.

In France, we have always held that the Press, associations, and assemblies, so powerful both for good and evil, must be considered in themselves, judged from the point of view of their practical effects, and controlled by special regulations. Is it not singular that the nation which is credited with an inclination towards abstract principles and reasoning by deduction, should be the very one which carefully ignores them in connection with so important a subject? Our legislators have made it a rule to join the three great liberties to the constitutional problem, considering the matter as a whole, and resolving it by a compromise between all the necessities it presents. On the other hand, the nation which, as a rule, has little liking for generalities and pure logic, relies implicitly on these discredited methods, this baseless dialectic, to establish the titles of the most essential public liberties. However that may be, these liberties have gained enormously by issuing from the turbulent sphere of politics, getting clear of the intrigues attendant on State policy, and entering the quieter judicial region, where they are consubstantial with the immemorial axioms which safeguard personal freedom of action. The most universal and protective of organic laws is as nothing to them in comparison with this putting out of court, which indicates their position near, but outside, the *forum*.

The system of political liberties, which secures to the individual the enjoyment of his private rights, is perfected by the representative form of government. An elected Parliament makes the laws and controls the Government. For more

than fifty years noteworthy statutes have successively extended the limits of the electoral body; the suffrage finally becoming almost universal. For more than fifty years the House of Commons has not contented itself with controlling the Government; it forms the ministries, the Prince having only the power to countersign the list of official councillors to the Crown, who are appointed his gaolers and masters. It is currently believed that personal liberty will not be protected without the guarantee of an elective body having the prestige and position of great power; that this sole guarantee efficiently protects it; and, finally, that the efficiency of the protection is in proportion to the extension, completeness, and fidelity of the representation. The first point is obvious; on the second an understanding is necessary; the third cannot be admitted without restrictions. Liberty is, in different ways, equally threatened, whether the sovereignty belongs to a single individual without check, to several without division, or to the majority of the whole nation without a counterbalance. It is always threatened when, in the equilibrium of social forces, the balance is too much on one side. A unitarian constitution, whatever its principle, allows it no protection beyond that of public custom. Let us confine ourselves to the consideration of three periods.

Under the Tudors and the first two Stuarts royalty was omnipotent. I have pictured it elsewhere, laden with spoils, gorged with riches, sacrosanct, impeccable, elevated in a sort of assumption. Erect, intact, it stood alone, while the other social forces around it were decimated, disorganised, and abased; a House of Lords where, at the feet of great prostrate oaks, mushroom peers began to spring up; a House of Commons composed of the creatures of the Prince, laden with his gifts and yet unsatisfied; a people weary of civil wars, and deprived of their ordinary leaders, both temporal and spiritual, by the overthrow of feudalism and the downfall of the Roman Church. A period began when royal despotism

no longer encountered any opposition, and flourished : a magnificent, paternal despoiler. Justice was extinguished in tyranny, and liberty was on the point of perishing, when a mighty revival of public spirit saved England from servitude.

Towards 1800 the scene changed. The House of Commons ceased to be a body representative of the nation. It merely represented a limited number of important electors, rich landed proprietors who surrogated themselves for the people in the exercise of the franchise. This oligarchy, which also ruled in the Upper House, engaged in a struggle with royalty. For the moment it triumphed over George III., but circumstances were adverse ; it beat a retreat, conquered and captive, though not as yet owning it. Partial measures began to abound, the "legislation of class" as it is called on the other side of the Channel, *i.e.*, in favour of one class only. The justice of the peace, a unique figure in the world, characterised this period, an embodiment of its noblest traits. To the landed proprietors were given great advantages, and all the influence ; to the manufacturers and traders, as the price of their abdication and at the expense of the entire nation, all the protections and prohibitions they demanded ; to the common people the duty of obedience, but also the right to live. On the one hand, repressive and preventive statutes of extreme rigour, veritable laws of servitude of which the "Six Acts" have remained as a memorable example ; on the other, official alms offered as a consolation to the immense pauperism which was the outcome of the institutions themselves. It was a period of magnificence like the preceding one, but its external glory, though it attracted all eyes, could not hide, even in England, the horrible sufferings, extreme degradation, and eclipse of ancient liberties.

In 1832 a new age began. The half-open door allowed the leading manufacturers and traders to penetrate into the *legal country*. The popular masses, following closely after them, threw their weight against the door and successively forced an

entry. In 1884 they were all admitted into the electoral enclosure, which, like a fortified country town in the Middle Ages, seeing its outskirts peopled and its suburbs extending, threw down its ramparts, pushed back its walls, and finally took in a whole district. Royalty and aristocracy were in the position of an ancient urban community, surrounded by a crowd of new residents. They could only maintain the position they appeared to enjoy by being silent with regard to their privileges, avoiding any mention of them to the less favoured, and yielding, or letting it be understood that they would yield, on any occasion when the exercise of their rights might create complications or appear obtrusive. The ancient influence, possession, and empire their title had once conveyed still kept them erect on a soil which was undermined and full of catacombs ; they escaped collapse simply by immobility. Brilliant also, but more especially fruitful, was this period of preparation, in which the nation learned how to command its destiny. An incalculable amount of iniquity, barbarism, misery, servility, and corruption had been eliminated ; the black and bloody stains could not resist the full light of discussion in a Parliament representative of the majority of the people. On the other hand an incalculable amount of justice, well-being, happiness, and liberty had been poured out upon British soil, and each subject participated in it. As a matter of fact, all these things had been accomplished by Houses and ministries, the leaders of which belonged not only to the middle, but even more to the upper classes. The nation had given suggestions, but neither it nor representatives chosen from its ranks had carried them out. Further, it was confronted by the shadow and the substance of two great Powers : a royalty in decline, which had just made some sort of figure with George III., and an aristocracy, glorious, enlightened, liberal, and opulent, which owned the greater part of the soil, and thereby had already, in a certain sense, obtained citizenship in the economic

city in which modern society was gradually being swallowed up. To-day the substance has become rarified, and the shadow wavers; democracy advances over ground that has been levelled before it; each day as it goes by, each fresh action performed, revives and strengthens its feeling of omnipotence. For the third time England is about to adopt a political system of government which is unitarian and without counterbalance. What has liberty to fear from a government of each by all, in which the popular majority exercises an unlimited power?

The popular majority may encounter no outward obstacle in the free play of its will, but within it has a bridle and a regulator; though, as a matter of fact, the bridle may not curb, and the regulator is sometimes defective, time and experience will perfect their operation and make it more constant and sure. The interests of an autocracy or body of privileged persons are in frequent opposition to the interests of the entire nation. The interests of the great majority, on the contrary, coincide to a very considerable extent with the interests of the whole. This coincidence is essential, profound, and evident; and when men do not recognise it of their own free will, they are forced to do so by circumstances. There is elementary political economy, intelligible even to uneducated minds, in such maxims as this: the spoliation of riches, in all the extent of their superfluity, will, when divided, yield but a miserable dividend. The superfluity provides most of the capital by which labour is maintained; divided, it would be but crumbs, and these crumbs would not fulfil the functions of the capital; they would be rapidly consumed in unproductive enjoyments. An unjust taxation, say for instance, the progressive tax pushed to extremes, discourages economy and disturbs all those who have possessions; capital leaves the country or does not become formed. An artificial rise in wages increases the net cost of production, restricts the market, thereby reducing the demand for labour, and everything ends in a return to the

former state of things, aggravated by the ruinous effect of the disorder into which economical relations have been thrown. Only extreme ignorance or want of forethought could be blind to these consequences, and a cynically brutal egoism face them. The progress of enlightenment, the publicity of discussions, and the strong light they project on doctrines and motives, raise obstacles, daily more powerful, in the way of such attempts. The English need scarcely fear them except at one point, viz., the *régime* of landed property, and that because they have to put right an abnormal situation : legacy of the oligarchic period and result of a partial legislation. I fear the attempts of a policy philanthropical and reformatory, optimistic and credulous, busy and meddlesome, which will not recognise the necessary quota of imperfection in everything human, invents remedies for every ill, and makes use of the State to produce a small amount of material advantage, dearly bought by the simultaneous expenditure of the vital force of the individual, far more than the effects of a directly tyrannical and rapacious policy.

A curious thing may be noted. This danger has been increasing for the last fifty years in the same proportion as Parliament has been growing more universally and completely representative of the nation. Before 1832, at a time when the immense majority of the people was unrepresented in the House of Commons, and had no voice in the formation of the Cabinets, public opinion, already conscious of its own force, kept a vigilant and jealous watch rather over the Acts of Parliament which contained a set of regulations or a hint of coercion, than over the statutes which granted additional powers to the ministers and their agents. Any intervention on the part of the law disquieted the nation, because the makers of the law were like strangers to them ; they were averse to all administrative protection, because the bureaucracy seemed like the hand of a government in which they had no part nor lot. At the present day, on the contrary, England

can regard the House of Commons as a reproduction in miniature of the entire nation, and the Cabinet as a reproduction in miniature of the House of Commons. In the laws the nation recognise their own work : the indirect outcome of their will. In the ministers and administrative personnel they recognise men taken from their own ranks, who represent them in some way or another, and hold a power of attorney as their elect. Measures of intervention, therefore, do not arouse the same suspicion, nor the action of the bureaucracy the same offence. As a matter of fact, the prejudices of the preceding period have not yet disappeared, but they have diminished and continue to diminish daily, as is always the case with effects which survive their cause. In virtue of this, the plenitude and exactitude of Parliamentary representation has singularly lessened the moral obstacles encountered until quite recently by governmental protection ; it has to a certain extent brought into prominence the liberty of the individual by softening the instinctive dislike and reasoned apprehension which struggle for it. Instead of the spontaneous determination not to receive it, by which every attempt to draw up a scheme of government based on statutes and controlled by officials was received, discreet suggestions, definite invitations, and finally urgent summons begin to appear, addressed to the legislator and the government. The nation who recognise themselves in these personages are no longer warned and forearmed as was the case when they represented one or two classes only, and not the whole of the people. They do not consider it excessive that the legislator should prohibit or prescribe certain actions to the individual, or that the Government should control, prevent, coerce, and play the part of arbitrator and judge. Nothing but a long education by means of facts will exhaust this credit open to authority, and insure the reappearance of the well-founded aversion, which formerly protected liberty by the sure and deep-seated instinct of the masses, in the form of the studied objections of the best informed and most enlightened public opinion.

4.—*The Family.*

The Englishman has a family. The judicial ties, which in England unite the wife to the husband and the children to the father, are of a very special nature. Since 1789 French family life has been organised on the model of a constitutional monarchy, with more or less of a leaning towards the republic. Up to our own days English family life has retained all the characteristics of an absolute monarchy. Let us try to picture it to ourselves as it was thirty years ago. As a rule the wife had no dowry ; it was the custom among those who were rich or in comfortable circumstances, to settle the estates on the eldest son, and divide the bulk of the personal property between him and the younger brothers. The daughter received what was called a portion ; generally a scanty income drawn from the paternal revenues. This undowered condition is very easily accounted for. With a dowry a woman would have claims, and a certain appearance of legal rights. The male desired to be the sole author of the welfare and riches of his family ; it ensured his being sole master. Supposing the woman by chance had great possessions. Marriage robbed her of them ; her capital, the revenues of her estates, the proceeds of her labour fell to her husband ; she could dispose of nothing, the making of a will was denied her. Her judicial personality was sunk in that of the father of the family ; she could not even distinguish herself from him in order to enter into a mutual agreement with him. She was not the legal guardian of her children. Legally she was not consulted when there was a question of their marriage. In fact, the *manus* was not heavier upon the Roman wife. It was the most severe law in all this legislation of statutes and immemorial usages, no natural generosity softened it ; chivalry, which had so greatly ameliorated the condition of women on the Continent, only glanced over this race virile to brutality, leaving nothing behind to lessen the arrogance and temper the de-

liberate egotism of the male. It owed its virtue to the great value attached to action which it alone had the power of diminishing. The woman was only permitted to be a faithful and submissive helpmate; she accepted the rôle and adapted herself to it.

Feelings of deference and habits of subordination became largely developed under this legal *régime*. The English wife was humble and timorous in the presence of her lord and master. Wherever he went she followed, even into the most unhealthy climates, leaving her children behind her. She was wife first and mother afterwards. "How do you pass your time, madame?" asked Tocqueville of an American woman, at a time when the Anglo-Saxon element still predominated in the United States. "We admire our husbands": the answer might have come from an Englishwoman. Habits so confirmed would yield but slowly to the operation of a new judicial system. In 1870 and 1882 the legislator sowed the germs of an immense moral revolution. Already the equity of jurisprudence had seemingly modified the harshness of the regulations which placed the interests of the wife at the discretion of the husband; but only women in easy circumstances could utilise the expensive procedure involved. The two latest statutes enfranchised women of every class; they were permitted to have property of their own, and attend to the administration of their own estates. Their liberty to dispose of, their ability to acquire, and their responsibility in the management of their property was absolute; the formula which reappeared in every article of the law was "as if they were not married." In 1886 the law went a step further; the mother was declared the legal guardian of her children. She might appoint a guardian to act in conjunction with the guardian appointed by the father, or, which is more significant, with the father himself. It was a sudden transition, a jump from excessive subordination to a very wide independence. It is a serious question to know

what in the long run the effect will be on the wife, and what her attitude in regard to the head of the family, when instead of encountering in the laws the repeated admonition that her duty is to efface herself and be useful, she finds a sort of exhortation to consider herself as one of two unfettered and equal contracting parties, a judicial personality with distinct interests over which she has entire control and can manage as she likes.

The children, who are more numerous than in France, are brought up apart in the nursery. No enervating tenderness falls to their share; they do not feel that they come before their father in the affections of their mother. The former sees little of them, and is always something of a stranger to them. They allude to him ironically as "the governor"—a French boy would say "*le patron*." The term implies the idea that the supreme authority is in his hands, and that he is the master of the house. The master is a person of whom ill is always spoken. The son, who in France feels unconstrained and at home under the paternal roof, the lad whose irreverent familiarity of manner makes us smile, is rarely to be met with in England. The amiable comrade, the pleasant and approving critic of his parents' methods of acting, already half-master of the house, ready like a partner or party legally interested to estimate or discount the inheritance of which he can be deprived but in part, is hardly known in England. There the most ordinary type is the young man of determined character, who only thinks of himself, makes his own plans for the future, gets engaged without consulting his parents, even, if necessary, marries without their consent, and regards the paternal home as the bird, with outstretched wings, regards the nest from which he means to fly away at the first puff of wind. The father is not confronted, as in France, with those legal parasites, the heirs on whom the property is settled. He exercises uncontrolled what I might call testamentary magistracy. Except in the case of entail, and with the

exception of the property entailed, he can freely dispose of his fortune, divide it equally or unequally among his children, bequeath it all to a stranger, or largely endow some public institution. His decision is law; it is not subjected to any restriction. It is not supervised, examined, and even judged and criticised by those who have the consciousness of a sort of natural or prior right, on the strength of which they may be tempted to thwart him. Taking everything into consideration and all differences apart, I know no personage in the modern world who puts me more in mind of the ancient Roman paterfamilias than the head of an English family; not so much on account of the effectiveness of his authority, since the son, more often than not, escapes it by an exodus, as of his importance, independence, and undisputed sovereignty in the interior of the home. He is a monarch reverenced in his own kingdom, almost a monarch by divine right. Compared with him the Frenchman seems like the President elected by a critical Parliament. Picture them both on the eve of engaging in a hazardous enterprise. The Frenchman is first of all obliged to use up some of his force in order to win over his wife and adult sons to the project, and overcome the persistent opposition he encounters every evening at his fireside. The French wife has a clear head, reasoning powers and courage of her own. Her husband finds in her a judicious counsellor, sometimes no mean critic, often a sensible colleague, but seldom the moral comfort of complete agreement. Too often he is discouraged, or else time goes by and the opportunity is lost. If he persists, he does not feel that there is behind him a safe retreat in case of rebuff, a place where he can recover himself with a companion who blindly believes in him, and will give him back his faith in himself. The stability of his resolutions, the sureness of his hand are profoundly affected. The Englishman encounters neither opposition nor resistance in his home. His wishes are undisputed. His sons, if present, respect them; if

absent, ignore them. His wife associates herself with him. He feels himself approved and followed, though it may be a little passively. In this clearly recognised authority, complete autonomy, and high responsibility there is the principle of an unusual force, importance, and energy. The family who have accustomed the English child to discipline, and habituated him when adolescent to liberty and responsibility, form him in the *rôle* of father and husband to take the initiative and to command.

The laws of succession and testamentation in England have effects which are felt beyond the precincts of the home. We have seen that under the terms of the law the sons are not secure of any part in the paternal inheritance. This uncertainty accustoms them to the idea that man must count only on himself; it develops virile qualities in them. Testamentary liberty, if Nature were not occasionally rebellious, should produce as many distinguished men as there are sons. In large families of great wealth the law of entail has virtually restored the privileges of the eldest son. Every year the younger sons of the family, with the advantage of a good education but no fortune, go forth from the home which can no longer shelter them. They go to seek wealth in Canada, Australia, and at the Cape. Their presence helps to raise or maintain the moral tone of the more or less mixed and doubtful society in such places. In other countries they would live in bare competence on their share of the paternal inheritance; in England they receive but a meagre pittance, and feel the necessity of creating an inheritance for themselves by their own industry. They expend themselves in enormous efforts, which are generally crowned with success. They, in their turn, found a family in which they reign supreme.

While the younger sons are thus furnishing recruits for every hazardous enterprise, conscious of more advantage accruing to them through their connection with a great house than a more considerable share of the paternal inheri-

tance would afford them, the heir elect remains in the home of his fathers. The testamentary liberty does not affect him less profoundly than his brothers. Completed by the law of entail, it concentrates in the hands of a single individual, from one generation to another, an increasing and accumulating inheritance, the revenues of which exceed the ordinary limits of individual power of enjoyment. The heart of the possessor succumbs to the attraction of power exercised for good, and becomes ennobled by the idea of a social mission. Thanks to this same liberty, the citizen can pass the limits of his own life in his benevolent ambitions; in fact, he can endow useful institutions to perpetuity without rendering them liable to a reduction or inopportune withdrawal of his bequest. In the same way the pretorian expedient of trusts enables him to constitute social bodies having a quasi-civil character of indefinite duration. Trusts complete his ability to include the future by making it one with the past, and thus he is encouraged to conceive great designs. Finally, the liberties of the Press, assemblage, association, and even federation give him the means of extending the circumference of his field of action in the same way as he has extended it from the point of view of duration, including in his sphere of operation the whole territory of the United Kingdom, and sometimes even of the whole world, as in the case of great missionary societies. All these are reasons why human personality in England is unusually ample, vigorous, and hardy. In no other country does the individual appear to be better endowed and equipped, whether for resisting the State and keeping a check upon it, or for supplying its deficiencies, and participating to a considerable extent in its work.

5.—*Property.*

Wealth is an instrument of power, security, and liberty to the individual. The English territory abundantly furnishes the raw material which incessant labour fashions and trans-

forms. There is no country where, in the same degree and within the same narrow limits, a very healthy climate, fertile soil, adapted both for corn and pasture, and an unusually rich, varied, and deep mineral subsoil, are to be found in conjunction. Tin, iron, and coal are piled in layers of prodigious thickness and expansion. Coal, which is used in all the manufactories, is everywhere within reach. It has been calculated that the yield of the coal mines alone, expressed in human labour, reaches the same figure as the production of a population covering forty-four and a half millions of acres. It is almost as if every inhabitant of the United Kingdom were provided with a slave labouring solely for his master's benefit. Moreover, England, by her geographical position in relation to the New World, Europe and the great ocean currents, and by the expansion and indentation of her coasts, seems preordained to become the mart of universal commerce. The activity of the natives has therefore at hand a material all ready to be turned to account; a never-failing spring of opulence from which every individual may draw, and many have drawn, with eagerness.

I have previously shown, and will endeavour to make it still clearer, that in the last two centuries the interval between one class and another has sensibly increased, and a gulf opened between their conditions and fortunes. This inequality has a profound effect upon the character of the citizen, on the means he has at his disposal, and consequently on the attitude he is led to adopt in regard to the State. In a country where some have nothing to lose, and others are so superfluously endowed that they can risk a great deal without any fear that their habits may be disarranged or their welfare affected, the spirit of initiative is far more general, and venturesome enterprises more numerous, than can be the case where riches are more equally divided. England has shown herself excellently apt at commerce, speculation, colonisation, and the emigration of both rich and poor. This superior aptitude proceeded originally

from historical causes, but it has undoubtedly been confirmed and developed by the outrageously disproportionate distribution of this world's goods. From this point of view it is a favourable circumstance that the preponderant element in society, that which gives tone to its character, is not based on those average fortunes which encourage people to be content with little, to live on what they have, to grow rich by daily saving, and not to desert the certain for the uncertain.

In addition to this, man is inclined to conceive and propose to himself ends in proportion to the greatness of the means he has at his disposal. Individuals, who command revenues comparable to those of a little State, acquire a quasi-royal sense of their omnipotence and social duties, and willingly undertake works of a public character and interest. In other countries such works have to be left to the charge of the general budget, in default of volunteers. In England there are those who voluntarily dispute them with the authorities, and take advantage of the procrastination of the latter to be beforehand with them. The activity and power of intervention of the State are circumscribed by the alacrity of these auxiliaries or competitors, who offer or force themselves upon it. We call to mind the immense canal constructed at the end of the last century by the care and at the expense of the Duke of Bridgewater. In France, for such a work, even in the present day, it would be necessary to attack the Chambers and the general Councils interested, promote a law, form a company, and put the bureaucracy and the department of the Ponts-et-Chaussées in motion. In England, the initiative and power of a single man are sufficient for the task.

One of the most characteristic signs of this economic condition is to be found in the history of commercial legislation. France, country of small patrimonies, was, at an early date, compelled to organise, even for modest enterprises, the association of capital with limited liability. Besides the joint stock companies, a form indispensable in great transactions,

and known even under the old *régime* by the name of chartered companies, she has authorised, since 1807, the limited liability company. England also, at an early date, legalised the joint stock company for enterprises of exceptional importance, but did not favour companies of limited liability. During the first half of the century she continued to recognise for ordinary transactions only those companies in which each shareholder accepted the entire burden of unfortunate speculation or bad management. With the exception of railways, nearly all the manufacturing companies and all the banking companies were composed of very large shareholders, sufficiently few in number to know each other well, and to arrive at a mutual understanding ; sufficiently well informed to be able to keep a close watch on the conduct of business ; and, for these two reasons, having no thought nor wish to avoid an unlimited and joint liability. The limited liability company is suited to people with small means, who, occupied with their own affairs, and incapable, even if they wished it, of having a voice in the management, comfort themselves with the thought that they have risked little, and only pledged themselves to what they can afford to lose. The great English capitalists did not require the same security as these ignorant and pusillanimous gamblers. They rejected it as likely to bring discredit on their enterprises. Even after 1862, when the law allowed the free formation of joint-stock companies with limited liability, the unlimited liability companies were still numerous, the banks, in particular, were mostly in this position, and it was only in 1879, consequent on a disastrous failure, that they solicited facilities for applying the new *régime* to themselves.[1]

[1] An excellent little book, *The Money Market*, characterises their attitude and claims as follows :—"The great capitalists, with few exceptions, are leagued against the principle of association of capital and limited liability." When unlimited liability was the only legal company system, none but the richest men could embark in great enterprises, the result being that the great houses became greater, and the rich richer, which led to the gradual elimination of the middle classes of commerce. In fact,

About this time little groups of financiers began to grow up, more powerful and concentrated than had hitherto been known, forming an *élite* of capitalists, backed by immense resources, equipped for great undertakings, and prepared for heavy responsibilities—worthy rivals of the State.

The enormous difference in social conditions enabled many to enter into competition with the public authorities, restricting their power of action on the one hand, but, on the other, obliging them to intervene as arbitrators and redressers of wrongs. Inequality in England is, indeed, in the force of things; I have shown how it originated in the extraordinarily active temperament of the race. Everywhere throughout the country equality is, as it were, against nature, and if an attempt is made to restore it, it tends to self-destruction more rapidly than would be the case elsewhere. In other words, if ever the English democracy, assuming control of its own destiny, is to undertake to correct so profoundly natural a disorder by means of the legislator, and to establish artificially a more equitable distribution,[1] it must have a Socialism more

mercantile transactions became so colossal that these latter classes were in danger of being absolutely exterminated. It was at this moment that the joint-stock principle came to their aid. It is significant that the manufacturers and traders should so long have accepted without complaint a code of regulations framed for the convenience of a financial oligarchy, and that they should have so marvellously prospered under a system which inferred a very large fund of fearlessness and spirit of adventure.

[1] It appears, however, that for some years past the inequality of fortune has been gradually diminishing. According to a communication from Mr. Goschen to the Statistical Society (December, 1887), the large and small incomes have diminished in number, to the advantage of the average income. From the figures furnished by several large companies it may be seen that whilst their realised capital increased 25 per cent. in ten years, the number of shareholders increased 72 per cent., so that the average value of the shares fell from £443 to £323. Similarly, the average value of the insurance policies fell from £492 to £466. The incomes between £150 and £1,000 increased in number, while those above £1,000 decreased. Mr. Giffen, on his side, is known to have arrived at a similar conclusion. Such an evolution could certainly not

decided in its aims, more powerful in its methods, and more constant in its operations than is to be found among other nations. The importance of this deduction cannot be estimated unless a distinction is made between the various kinds of wealth. There is not only a difference, greater than is usually the case, between opulence and poverty, but between the two great classes of property, personal and landed, there is a difference from the legal point of view which is unknown to us, at least, in the same degree. The Roman and French idea of inheritance, which made no distinction between the various kinds of property, has no part in English law. In every estate there are certain regulations for landed property, and others for personal property. These two are quite distinct, and the first has the chief consideration of the law. A succession is opened *ab intestat :* the conditions are not the same for the land, and the money or investments. The land always goes to the eldest ; the money and the shares are divided. For every succession, even testamentary, the public treasury until quite lately used two different systems of weights and measures, and the balance was all in favour of the land ; in fact, up to 1853, nothing had to be paid on it, and afterwards only a third of the amount paid on personal property.

proceed from a single cause. It might be partly due to the measures of protection and regulation, already more or less socialistic in character, which the legislator had been prodigal of for some years past, on behalf of the hitherto cruelly neglected working classes. A hand was held out to the working man ; he received new facilities for the protection of his interests and the alleviation of his miserable condition, which led to a marked rise in small incomes. The same evolution, in so far as it affected the decrease of large incomes, might result from the actual crisis, which weighed more heavily on the proprietors and the capitalists than on the wage-earners. The increase in the number of limited liability companies betrayed a people who intended to limit their risks more and more, and regarded the shares they took in a concern as so many lottery tickets. Finally, the rapid increase in the number of branches of the savings banks furnishes an equally significant sign in the same direction. But the inherent character of the nation is too strong to yield without resistance to the effect of these comparatively ephemeral causes.

It was not until 1894 that the successions to landed property and personal property were assimilated, and both became equally responsible to the public treasury. Even then there existed a difference between them, a survival of the obsolete past, viz., that the landed part of each estate should be treated as a usufruct for life, and enjoy a delay of from four to eight years before it is completely free; we have nothing similar in France. Need I recall the civil privileges which protected the land against the plea of the creditor, the economic privileges which burdened with a premium on the profit of its products, the products of every other industry, the political privileges which conferred on those who enjoyed them almost arbitrary powers of administration and policy in the provinces? Even in the present day, and under the democratic law of 1881, is it not remarkable that the right of suffrage rests solely on the possession and occupation of land or house, and that personal property, were it even that of a Rothschild, cannot entitle a man to be an elector?

Personal property is unlimited; the inequality of fortunes composed of personal property therefore, causes only moderate grievances. The share that falls to the lot of the favoured does not debar others from the attainment of equal possessions. Landed property, on the contrary, is limited in accordance with the land that may be turned to account. The share that falls to the lot of the few cannot be overmuch increased without depriving others of their heritage, and creating a monopoly which is certain to excite hatred. The losers instinctively seek for some one to redress their wrongs; they find, willingly recognise, and soon call to their aid, the State and the law. This is what has come to pass in England. During the whole of the eighteenth century the class of great rural proprietors, known by the collective title of the gentry, set themselves systematically to work to acquire all the arable land. At the end of the seventeenth century there were still a large number of small proprietors, harassed, vexed in a

thousand ways, tempted by advantageous offers, finally sold their land, and the boundary was removed between their domains and the *latifundia*, already extended by the division of the pasture land. The cultivation of these large territories, in the same way, was acquired by a few proprietors, and the little farms disappeared. The ruined farm buildings may still be seen here and there, in cases where they were not razed to the ground. The humble tenants of former years were compelled to go forth like bands of emigrants, and their places were filled by a few great capitalist farmers. The agricultural labourers followed them. Pasturage and flocks to a large extent replaced the cornfields, which meant a great economy of manual labour, and led to the exodus of a whole population of agricultural labourers. The *latifundia*, cleared of men, with here and there a lonely building standing out against the horizon, gave an impression of solitude and silence. The ownership of land, thus concentrated, had the detestable character of a monopoly, and received the even more suspicious character of a mortmain from the custom of legal entails. The settlements usual in all great families assured the integral transmission of the patrimonial domain from generation to generation. Two-thirds of the soil were thus debarred from commerce.

In the face of so many abuses we cannot be surprised that the law and the State were called upon to intervene and redress the grievances caused by existing institutions and customs. A number of settled estate Acts furnished a remedy for the anti-economic omnipotence of those who owned land under settlements by authorising the heir of entail, with the acquiescence of the Lord High Chancellor, to perform all the acts necessary for conservation ; in particular to sell one part of the property in order to obtain funds for the improvement of the other, to consent to leases longer in point of time than his own possession, and even to part with the land entirely. The tenant in tail is now as free as any tenant in fee simple

whatsoever ; further, a Conservative Lord High Chancellor could suggest, without creating any sensation, the abolition of the right of primogeniture, and the prohibition of all settlements for the future. In Ireland, the system followed in Ulster has been taken up by the whole country, and dual ownership, a result of it, has served as a starting-point for the three F.'s—free-sale, which allows the farmer to sell his interest in the property when he wishes ; fair rent ; and fixity of tenure—which aim a formidable blow at liberty of agreement by substituting the decision of a committee of arbitrators for the free-will of the proprietor. Further, an universal expropriation of the real owners has been undertaken by the State, which supplies the funds to the farmers who wish to become purchasers, demanding reimbursement only by small and deferred payments, covering the original sum advanced and interest on the same. Very much the same thing has been done in Scotland for the benefit of the crofters. In England, protective laws give the farmer right to rid himself of game which damages his property ; and other laws guarantee him, in case of eviction or retirement, compensation for any permanent improvements he may have made, at his own expense, in the land he has cultivated. Finally, quite recently, the statutes of 1888–1892–1894 granted generally to County Councils extended rights of expropriation which they must put into force in order to institute, for the benefit of the poor, either recreation grounds or small dwelling-houses. In such cases the State, through the medium of the county, intervenes as a benevolent lender who, by agreeing to long-deferred payments, reduces the sums owing by the farmer who borrows from him to a minimum. It is noteworthy that the larger number of these reforms strike at the very principle of property ; they deny the landlord his right to use and abuse, refuse him liberty to regulate the condition of his land by free contract, and even grant the tenant indemnities for improvements he may have made unknown to or against the wish of

the proprietor. Finally, they furnish some sort of extenuating circumstances for the economic position of the land, resulting from the small number of those who hold it; and, as a kind of excuse and commencement of reparation, offer the right of expropriation, which is made dependent on three elective committees nominated by practically universal suffrage, *i.e.*, composed chiefly of non-proprietors. All this is an indication of disquiet in the minds of the people, a sort of uneasiness in their consciences; it is a state of things which cannot endure.

6.—*Groups: the Race.*

The family is not the only group in which the activity of the individual is employed and concentrated, and finds a point of support against the State. His activity also finds vent in other natural and more extended groups. I call them natural because they belong to those which "the law finds and does not create." They are in fact organised by individuals; but they proceed from necessities superior to individual wills, and all the power of governments cannot prevent them from running their course. Local, provincial and national groups merit separate study; but space fails me in this work and I will limit myself to considering the race, the various classes of society, and the religious sects. The two latter groups interest us in two ways, by their relation to the State, and their effect on the individual. The State is compelled to regard them as organised and independent forces, capable of energetic and deliberate opposition. It is obliged to reckon with them; they dictate to it, limit, constrain, or second it, or supply its deficiencies. On the other hand, man finds in them a sphere of collective life other than that of public life; he acquires the sentiment of duties other than those of the subject and the citizen; he becomes inspired by other impersonal aims, all of which are so many powers and forces, titles and arguments, against the claims of the State. These groups may become

the agents of tyranny; each of them is strong enough to influence the public authorities and dictate the law. So long as they maintain an equilibrium amongst themselves they are doubly the agents of liberty; they form material and moral centres of opposition and hold the central authority in check. They inspire man with noble passions, and he refuses to be coerced by the injunctions of State policy.

Above these two groups is a third, more comprehensive than the nation itself, *viz.*, the race. England is not only a nation and an empire, it is an *ethnical quantity*, composed of distinct aggregrates, scattered over every continent, divided by institutions, separated by interests, yet bound together by unity of origin, identity of blood and language and by a common fund of ideas and tendencies. Such in former days were the United States, and such to-day are Canada, the Cape and Australia. The Frenchman seeking air and liberty encounters in his country's rare colonies the same Government, even more arbitrary in its methods, that he desired to escape; and if he goes further afield he is chilled by the cold of a vast world where the *oui* is never heard. The Englishman of the United Kingdom, who does not find his position to his taste or is not satisfied with the political *règime*, has a second and larger country, the different provinces of which offer him every degree of free government and the most varied economic conditions. He can leave British soil, and settle in numberless places in the two hemispheres, without ever feeling that he is a foreigner among his new fellow-citizens. This ability to steal away and escape, peculiar to countries which have colonies peopled by autonomous populations, assists the vigorous development of a feeling of individual independence. It reconstitutes, as it were, between each citizen and his government the conditions antecedent to the free social contract. The political *règime* is not imposed, but proposed. Each man has the right to adhere to or reject it, for other forms of government are within reach. Political conditions of another type are

open to him in countries where he will have no need to feel that he is a stranger. In England, therefore, we shall not encounter the habit of resigned submission, peculiar to countries which the dissatisfied citizen rarely leaves, because by leaving he would have to face an unknown, or at least a foreign land. The very diffusion of the race is a guarantee of liberty.

7.—*The Classes.*

I have related elsewhere [1] the history of the classes in England. I will not take it up again in this work, but only add a few remarks bearing directly on my subject.

First, the English government has, as an essential characteristic, an oscillation which places the supreme authority alternately in the hands of two opposing political parties. If one of these parties simply represented a certain class that class would have an opportunity of freely furthering its interests in the legislation and administration, and an oppressive system of government would ensue. Happily for the English, the parties, on the other side of the Channel, have a past, regard for which is a bond between their members, and the tradition of which, handed down, has attached certain families and localities to one cause from time immemorial, and united them against the opposing cause, independently of any present utility. The stratification of the parties is largely historic, whilst the stratification of the classes is essentially economic. There may have been from time to time an approximative correspondence of the divisions between the superposed strata; there has never been continuity or combination. In this way the prestige of history and veneration for the past have acted, and continue to act as safeguards of individual liberty.

But it is not probable that the distinction between the political parties and the social classes can be maintained in

[1] See *Le Developpement de la Constitution et de la Société politique en Angleterre.*

contemporary society. The classes are gradually becoming transformed into parties. In the struggle for existence, every day more violent, present interests create affinities which outweigh all others, and historic bonds become unloosed at the smallest pressure. Political society in the present day is like a heterogeneous and moving mass, divided into blocks which continually knock one against the other. At the beginning of modern times the social classes so nearly encroached one upon the other, the barrier between them was so low and easy to surmount, that they might have been considered for the moment as a single class with interior subdivisions. I have shown how the smooth ascent which, beginning at the humblest, does not stop until it arrives at the highest dignity, was interrupted in the eighteenth century by the immense expansion of industry, and how the commercial disorder was aggravated by the enterprises of the landed aristocracy. A gulf has opened between the great proprietor and the farmer, between the farmer and the labourer, between the master and the workman, between the rich manufacturer and the wealthy owner of the soil. The opposition and strife among the different classes have usually resulted in an appeal to the State, which is the natural arbitrator of conflicting claims, or a pressure brought to bear upon the State making it an instrument for power and profit. Each class now attempts to make use of the law to protect itself, to fortify its position, to trouble or weaken its adversaries and to offer to neutrals the inducement of certain advantages, thereby lulling their grievances or assuring their alliance. The historical parties still exist, but they have become mere playthings; the flatterers and instruments of the passions of each class. They yield themselves up to the law, and naturally liberty has to pay the cost of such collusion. The bulk, the force, the evolution and the tendencies of each class are therefore of great importance to the future of British liberty. We will endeavour to characterise them briefly.

A.—*The Gentry.*

Looking at it from a distance, English society appears to be divided into two distinct "nations"—the rural and the manufacturing. At the head of the first are the gentry, *i.e.*, the class of great landed proprietors. The influence of this intelligent, enlightened and educated class enormously increased during the whole of the eighteenth century and up to 1832. I have shown[1] these 150,000 gentlemen, shut up in their indivisible *latifundia*, and masters of the whole rural district.[2] The civil law confirmed their position; no tax was laid upon them by the public treasury; the statutes relating to excise and customs protected the products of their land against competition. It seemed as if the word "land" had a peculiar virtue of its own which carried with it certain privileges. Elsewhere, such privileges are conferred by birth; here, the land secures them, and, as it were, drops them into the hand of the legislator. To get a complete idea of that personage, the squire, (gentleman proprietor), we must consider him in his relations, not only to things, but also to the men who surround him. Every one, without exception, is dependent upon him—the clergyman, who in one case out of two is chosen by him; the farmer, to whom he can give six months' notice; and the agricultural labourer, whom he houses by the week. He has still further power over these men by right of his administrative and judicial authority. In the county he exercises part at least of the powers we divide between the conseil de préfecture, the recteur, the ingénieur des Ponts-et-Chaussées, &c. He also exercises those of a Justice of the Peace, examining magistrate, commissary of police and preliminary court of justice. Whether it be alone, at the Petty Sessions, the Special Sessions,

[1] In 1877, 37,409 possessed twenty-five millions of acres out of thirty millions.

[2] See *Le Developpement de la Constitution et de la Société politique en Angleterre*, 1 vol., Librairie Armand Colin.

or the Quarter Sessions, he is always to be found on the Bench, deciding the different cases, and discharging the duties of his high position. His jurisdiction has not been controlled by any superior instance since the end of the seventeenth century, neither has it been subjected to the writ of *certiorari* by which important questions are called up before the Courts of Westminster. The methods of summary justice have been gradually introduced into the cases submitted to him, and in the same proportion those whom he judges have had their protection withdrawn. Nevertheless, in most cases it is enough for him to allege his good faith in order to avoid repression, and all action against him is suspended for six months.

A crowning act, which was being led up to during the whole of the eighteenth century and part of the nineteenth, made him absolute master of those surrounding him. Legislation under Elizabeth had placed parish autonomy upon a firm footing; legislation in the eighteenth century took an opposite course to that of the preceding century; and the parish magistrates were deprived of their prerogatives, which were transferred to the justices of the peace. These justices determined the assessment of the poor-rate and the distribution of charity. Meantime, the poor-rate became a topic of local taxation, the stem on which additional fractions of a penny were grafted. A large proportion of the public money was therefore under the direction, not of those who contributed it, according to the English principle, but of an authority chosen from the upper classes. It is true that the land, or rather the proprietors of the land, bore the whole burden of this tax, and therefore had a right to a voice in the matter of the employment of the public money.

A final privilege completed and confirmed the situation. Landed proprietors alone have access to the House of Lords, the possession of a great estate being the first condition of their patent. The rise of the land census made only landed proprietors eligible for the House of Commons. They have,

moreover, pocket boroughs, the houses and land of which belong to them, "nursed boroughs" and even great towns, the venal corporations of which they buy for cash. A figure expresses this situation and sums it up. At the beginning of the nineteenth century 487 members out of 658 were virtually elected by the Lords and rich squires.

This enormous growth of the power of the gentry has led to their occupying a unique position in the midst of the new nation developing around them, and the part they play in it has become more and more contradictory and inconsistent. Landed property and its owners even now constitute a world apart, surrounded by a different atmosphere and governed by laws of gravitation which are not in accordance with those of modern economic society. That a thing so necessary to all parties as that the land should become a matter of monopoly by systematic and concerted concentration in certain hands, that it should be withheld to a certain extent from traffic by the law of entail, that it should be worked as a whole to its utmost capacity—that is to say, with large application of capital, and under the most precarious conditions—yearly rent—that it should eventually lose, by the political and social advantages appertaining to the possession of the soil, the actual value determined by the size and security of its revenues, and that it should assume the fantastic value of a fancy article, are so many conditions which have thrust, and continue to thrust, landed property into a sphere of facts and ideas as completely isolated economically as it is judicially.

It is impossible that a class so highly favoured and firmly established on the soil should not be prejudiced to some extent against the disturbances resulting from letting others do as they like. How can they understand the advantages of the "struggle for life" which is the principle of all improvement, and at the same time the highest guarantee of individual liberty? They take no interest nor part in the social movement caused by each man seeking to employ his abilities and

the shifting of property until it falls into the hands most capable of making use of it. They have always dreamed and still dream of a firmly established world, in which the privileged positions are upheld by the law and magnificently purchased by voluntary or compulsory philanthropy. Their instincts have always inclined them towards a patriarchal system of government and humanitarian system of legislation. Patriarchal government—they conceive it in an exclusively English form, by the combination and concentration of all authority in the hands of the justice of the peace. Of yesterday's growth alone is their comprehension that the administrative authority is too technical, complicated and circumstantial for them, and they resigned it, not from weakness or lack of courage, but from a deliberate consciousness of their incompetence. Humanitarian legislation : the first poor-rate under Elizabeth was mostly paid by the gentry, who even by degrees took upon themselves all the expenses of relief, contrary to the purport of the original statute which taxed personal as well as landed property. Under Charles II. they added to the text of the anti-economic clauses, notably by the article relating to indoor relief. At the end of the eighteenth century they protested by an Act of Parliament against that worst of socialisms which cynically metes out alms in accordance with necessities. No more open encouragement to improvidence, idleness and misconduct was ever given. The re-establishment of indoor relief was also due to them and bore the same fruits of corruption, and yet they did not take the warning to heart.

All this philanthropy which was sincere, yet self-interested, aimed instinctively at averting the vigilance of the legislator by correcting the most crying abuses of the landed property system. The means, equally with the object, proved abortive. The gentry simply gave an example to the public authorities and furnished them with the idea to their own detriment. Philanthropy in the hands of the individual is in reality an accomplice of the State, always ready to play the part of

deserter, or at least to treat with the enemy. The landed proprietors did not incur the reproach of inconsistency when, in the Reformist Parliament of 1832 they undertook the administration of the Factory Bills.[1] These they passed in spite of the opposition of the manufacturers, thereby subjecting this, the chief of all industries, to minute regulations, and the superintendence of the State. However, this diversion, in which the pleasures of retaliation were mingled with the noblest and sincerest motives, did not protect them from the attentions of the legislator. In short, the whole rural organisation was presented in the form of a paradox which aimed at establishing order in accordance with the principles governing the surrounding world. Not only did this paradox appeal to and invite the interference of the State, but furnished it in advance with a sort of apology. The powerful position of the landed gentry conferred on them almost absolute authority over the whole surrounding neighbourhood. Official protection could not be charged with depriving liberty of what liberty deprives this other equally arbitrary authority. At bottom it matters little to the individual whether it is the proprietor of a district who deprives him of his licence to sell drink, simply because it is his pleasure to do so, or the State by a temperance law ; in reality there is no difference. If, on the other hand, the law intervenes beneficially, as in the case of forcing a landlord to sell lots of ground for the erection of places of worship for the Dissenters, or in order to prevent an abusive system of regulation regarding the alignment of houses in a quarter of the town belonging to a single proprietor, would not Parliament and the State be considered as deliverers? Would they be accused of infringing private rights? The natural effect of liberty, exercised amid exceptional circumstances, was an unexpected

[1] In 1846, the Six Hours' Bill, supported by Lord Morpeth, Lord John Russell, Sir Robert Peel, and Lord John Manners, was opposed by Messrs. Hume, John Bright, Roebuck, Cobden, and thrown out by a majority of ten. In 1844, Cobden refrained from voting on the Twelve Hours' Bill presented by Sir John Graham (a Conservative).

development of arbitrariness and even tyranny. This effect eventually compromised liberty itself, and covered up the defects of socialistic expedients.

In short, the gentry may resent the interference of supreme authority in certain questions; they never openly resent it. They have a vague feeling that the over-accentuation of their economic situation justifies the moderating and arbitral intervention of the legislator. Their habits of protection, and their humanitarian instincts, which are the outcome of the situation, are not essentially antagonistic to the interference of the State.

These are the strongly marked and still existing characteristics of the local gentry, too firmly ingrained and inveterate to disappear in a day, even when the position which gave rise to them has been considerably impaired and shaken and its chief foundations menaced with ruin. The great and all-important change which has been effected is that, though the actual extent of landed properties remain the same, their relative importance has been singularly diminished by the development of funded property. The depopulation of the country has deprived the rural world, headed by the gentry, of the prestige of a numerical majority. The centre of gravity of the mass has passed from this rarified body to another body denser and ampler, which recognises other chiefs and regards the gentry as strangers. Economically, the abolition of the Corn Laws in 1846 took away one of the privileges granted to landed property and placed it under the *régime* of the common law. Since this epoch, the landlords have seen a gradual fall in the value of rents, a depreciation which in no way determined them to demand a revocation of the law; they contented themselves with timidly recommending fair trade and applauding the fruitless attempts of the British Zollverein, which have been the result of Imperialism. Politically, the decline was longer and more hesitating and yet equally irreparable. The law of 1832, however, might pass for a Conserva-

tive measure in intention, although Liberal in its effects, it was completed by the laws of 1867 and 1884 which permitted access to the electoral body, the former for town labourers and the latter for country labourers. England now has *practically* universal suffrage. Two complementary laws—the Ballot Bill and the Act against corruption—seriously impaired the influence of the gentry by suppressing intimidation and the sale of votes. All these laws have helped to constitute an England, legally, if not morally, new. They have prepared a transformation which will not be completed—I mean will not become permanent—for half a century. But the movement is betrayed, year after year, by statutes more and more openly democratic, and recently by the degradation of foreign policy, which has been brought down to the level of popular intelligence and passions. Royalty, however, has not disappeared, as in France or Spain, nor has a republican party become leagued against it; the House of Lords has not been seriously threatened, and the inner world of politics has not opened wide its ranks to men of another class, the class whose wishes would henceforward be its law. Finally, administratively, the gentry have unresistingly accepted a dispossession which has left them with only their judicial powers, the police and the grant of licences, transferring all the rest of their prerogatives to the elective local corporations. This dispossession was still further characterised by the allocation, made in the counties, of certain parts of the general taxation (licences, aliquot parts of the rights on testamentary succession and of excise on beer, and of additional duty on alcohol) on the condition that the product may be applied to an expenditure determined by the law.

The jealous care with which the county squires avoided the subsidies of the State has been plainly evident in higher circles. But here it is no longer the gentry, but an elective and popular authority which receives the subsidies and determines their use. This, indeed, is the most important

revolution which has disturbed England, for here the law has come into direct contact with customs, and attempted to modify them. To begin with, the landed aristocracy, hitherto without competitors, were confronted in each county, district, and parish with bodies animated by a different spirit to their own. A rapidly increasing bureaucracy kept it in check, because the legislation governing these bodies is so arranged that elements are included which do not cut much of a figure: the petty townspeople in the county councils and the labourer in the parish councils. These new-comers do not fail to grow bolder with time, and to exercise the influence belonging to the majority. That unique and central personage, the justice of the peace on his seat, whom a Lord Chancellor, at a period of crisis, characterised by the sentence: "The only question is to know whether the Justices of the Peace will or will not do their duty," no longer exists constitutionally; the people, with the acquiescence of the law, surround and press upon him, climbing up the degrees which placed him above them. It is especially in local administration that one can predict to a certainty and shortly a decisive change, a new departure which, far from reserving for the gentry a distinct *rôle*, thrusts them like a nameless element into a democracy which will henceforward control their destinies.

B.—*The Farmers and the Agricultural Class.*

Below the great landed proprietors are the great moneyed farmers, a small class which steadily increases at the expense of the small farmers.[1] This class, also, as it were, was somewhat

[1] Between 1851 and 1876 the number of small farms (under 100 acres) fell from 39,139 to 33,132; the number of large farms (over 1,000 acres) rose from 492 to 582. The *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* (for 1897) stated that between 1885 and 1895 the small estates (between 50 and 300 acres) increased in number by 2½ per cent., with a corresponding decrease of 3 per cent. in the number of estates of 300 acres and upwards. What, on the other hand, is the explanation of the fact that the number of farmers steadily decreased? It fell from 371,700 in 1851 to 318,500 in 1876, and to 290,800 in 1891.

out of the economic perpendicular, which caused a certain obscurity and distortion in their ideas, regarding the *rôle* of the State. The natural ambition of this class was to secure their own progress by obtaining a firmer hold over the land, the actual possession of which was as yet denied them. The law had already assured them compensation for any improvements they might make on the farms, and authorised them, in accordance with the circumstances of each particular case, to carry out such improvements regardless of the approval of the proprietor. The security of a long lease being unobtainable, they set to work, and, impelled by their desires beyond the limit of a reasonable guarantee, went to the length of claiming that their possession should be transformed into quasi ownership. Fixity of tenure, a kind of modified confiscation, and the determination of the price of rents by official arbitration, which was a patent infringement of the right to enter into an agreement, both figured on the programme of the Farmers' Alliance. Here, again, the socialism of the State did not encounter any resolute opponents.[1]

The moneyed farmers, as remote socially as the proprietors from the agricultural labourers, did not fill up the immense gulf between the two classes. Compelled to take up their position at the very foot of the ladder, the latter class counted for and weighed less and less in the sum and equilibrium of political forces. It is well known that the development of the great manufactories in England was extraordinarily expansive, vigorous, and rapid. The same effects that elsewhere we have seen sluggish, slow and interrupted, were in this case powerful, concentrated, and intense. The growth of the urban, and depopulation of the rural, districts progressed with extraordinary celerity. The rural population made up at one time the whole of England, and not only was the proportion

[1] See Mr. Howard's address to the Farmers' Congress in 1885. These demands were a new departure for the English "Alliance." The Scotch "Alliance" had formulated them long before.

between it and the urban population reversed, but the former fell to a proportionately miserable percentage, and is still declining. The last census shows it as losing nearly a tenth during the decade 1881–1891, and representing only 10·36 per cent. of the active population. Again, in 1881 it fell from 3·95 to 3·25 per hundred acres; and during the last ten years it shows a still further decrease. Not only in numbers has it lost, but the petty proprietors have departed, followed by the small farmers, the big farmers and agents now occupying nearly the whole territory.

Finally, let us consider the agricultural labourers. The towns attracted the healthiest, strongest, and most active; they swarmed thither in great numbers, leaving behind to found families those who were unable to follow them, the timid, the weak and the idle. "We have only old men left," sadly exclaimed a farmer in the inquiry of 1877. Each exodus was thus signalised by a selection favourable to the urban population and destructive to the rural population. After each departure, the remaining population was less long-lived, capable of filling up the gaps, and becoming physically regenerated by procreation. In many places the peasantry could only furnish degenerate specimens of the species. After Tory Socialism, the poor-rate and the workhouse put the finishing touch to their enfeeblement and degradation. In addition to this, the relative salubrity of rural life, in their case, lost half its reparative virtue. I have drawn a picture elsewhere of these wretched creatures living in slums, three or four miles from the scene of their agricultural labours, less exhausted, perhaps, by actual toil than by the length of their journey every morning and evening, and nights of promiscuousness in time of infection. This state of things is gradually becoming more and more rare; but who can calculate the length of time necessary to recover from its hereditary effects? In short, in the last hundred years the centre of social gravity has not only been displaced, but has,

as it were, been transferred from one pole to the other. In the country districts the State could no longer reckon upon a middle class composed of prosperous and active men, independent of the freeholders, such as in former years had furnished the soundest portion of the Parliamentary representation; it had to fall back all of a sudden on the reduced and debilitated population, who were like strangers on a soil which did not belong to them, and in cottages which, as a rule, they rented by the week—a population almost as shifting as that of the manufacturing districts. The large, narrow-minded, eager, avaricious and hard-working class, which forms the basis of our French political world, made up of petty rural proprietors and labourers living in their own cottages, as much a part of the land as a statue of the marble from which it has been hewn, more sensible of local than of class interest, trustees and guardians of the Conservative interest, an admirable dead weight opportunely restoring the disturbed equilibrium, has nothing analogous in England. It is in England rather than in France that the inferior rural strata has become a dust which a breath of wind will scatter, or rather, perhaps, a thin mud which adheres to the soil by virtue merely of its own weight.

Shrewd landed proprietors tried to fix this population by assigning them cottages with plots of ground. In 1871 an organisation similar to that of the trade unions was inaugurated by Mr. Arch among the peasantry. It did not succeed in taking root and expanding. Not till 1884 did the legislator first begin to take a public interest in this too long neglected class. The field labourers formed the great majority of the million and a half on whom the electoral statute bestowed the right to vote, and in his programme Gladstone avowed the intention of strengthening the body of electors by adding to it a half-educated class, whose education would be furthered by their consciousness of having a new duty to perform. Two other laws facilitated the constitution of

allotments and small holdings; whether by private purchase or, in certain cases, by expropriation, was decided by an elected local authority. Finally, the last law relating to parish councils brought the elective assemblies down to the level of these obscure masses, giving the latter a chance of obtaining a place in the former, which they could not reasonably hope to obtain in the case of county and district councils. The office of the parish councillor naturally appealed, it is easy to believe, to the ambition of the field labourer, and his election did not have the effect of taking him out of his class. It could not, therefore, be said that the public authorities were still indifferent to the rural working population, and had not held out a hand to raise them up; but up to the present every effort made on their behalf has proved futile. It is by no means evident that their participation in electoral power has made any difference in the result of the elections. The two parties, Liberal and Tory, have found them neutral, which signifies that they have nothing in common with the ideas and passions dominating either of these two parties. M. de Rousiers, on a recent journey, was struck by the sort of unconsciousness and stupefaction into which the rural labourer is plunged, and out of which he cannot rouse himself. If a final example of his want of intelligence and apathy is required, it will be found in the statistics which set forth the private or forced sales that have been made with a view to creating allotments or small holdings. These transactions have been extremley infrequent. In two years and a half (December, 1894–Junè, 1897) they did not exceed 15,000 acres in round numbers; and what is even more remarkable is that the expropriations made by authority were precisely nil; there was not a single case of compulsory purchase, and only five of compulsory hiring. As to the small holdings, they did not exceed a hundred and twenty acres, bought by three counties, in six parishes. We must wait; the forces which the law has set in motion will eventually realise their own power;

the sentiments and methods of action of the rural population will, in the long run, harmonise with their interests.

C.—*The Leaders of Industry and the Operative Class.*

The industrial population is animated by a totally different spirit. At their head are the upper manufacturing classes, who, in 1832, obtained a position of authority, and since 1846 have led the way almost unopposed.

Prior to the great mechanical inventions of the eighteenth century, and even for a short time afterwards, these upper classes were not exempt from any of the errors with which prevailing political economy was pervaded. The great economic truths, entirely abstract and theoretic, were in frequent contradiction with the deductions suggested by a brief and restricted experience, and the appearances at which ordinary common sense stopped short. It was not without difficulty that they obtained the assent of the public, and even that of the classes whose interest it was to discern them. Until after the commencement of the last century all England believed that wealth consisted essentially in precious metals; that it was the interest of the State to keep them in the country; that the enrichment or impoverishment of the country might be measured by the relative importance of the imports and the exports, and that the gain realised by one nation always corresponded with the loss sustained by another; that custom house duties must necessarily benefit the people whose government collects them; that the production permitted to certain industries is a hindrance to other national industries; and that labour, production and consumption must be regulated at home. It was only between 1820 and 1825 that the merchants and manufacturers, becoming aware of their power, repudiated these doctrines and disclaimed protection. Surrounded by every natural advantage, they believed themselves capable of making their way unaided. Protection

implies certain restrictions ; they preferred to yield on occasion to the claims of the stronger rather than be continually escorted, guarded, and protected against themselves on the assumption that they were always the weaker. Year after year would-be protective laws which regulated the manufactures, prohibited or enjoined the use of certain products, hindered the traffic of merchandise, the removal of workmen, the exportation of machines, &c., were struck out of the statute book.[1] I have described the evolution elsewhere. The immense results it achieved encouraged the whole of the upper industrial and commercial class to adopt the principle of Free Trade. It is a strange thing that no principle has been brought forward under a more absolute and generalised form, based more exclusively on deduction, and with greater disregard for facts, than in England, the native land of induction. "Political economy," Senior said, "is independent of facts." Its abstract character was preserved from the time of Ricardo, who initiated it, up to the time of John Stuart Mill, passed on by McCulloch, Miss Martineau, and others. The principle of competition became inflated by success, enlarged by practice, elevated and defined by deep thought ; and it was finally resolved into the general maxim that the free fight is of necessity a law of human society, and that the survival of the strongest and most capable is the real sovereign good. Liberty had no argument more decisive for declining the intervention of the State. For forty years the big manufacturers and merchants remained faithful to their ideas. They defended them with all the eagerness of the convert who has faith in his formula, and the anti-humanitarian scorn of the combatant who knows himself capable of conquering. They struggled against the Factory Acts, and submitted to them without accepting their principle. It was not until after 1867 that the admittance of workmen into the "legal

[1] See *Le Developpement de la Constitution et de la Société politique en Angleterre*. Part III. chap. vi.

country" changed their methods, though not their convictions. Since that period electoral interests have forced them to pay more attention to men and facts. Even philanthropy was not unknown among them ; at times it inspired them and faintly coloured their policy, though never forming its basis. The State, as a rule, had to recognise them as resolute or resigned opponents, approving or sceptical critics, of its measures of intervention in the interests of the working classes.

The history of the lower manufacturing classes during the last hundred years is significant and full of instruction. At the end of the last century public opinion was undergoing a complete and vigorous reaction against the ideas of the French Revolution. In 1799 and 1800 some manufacturers passed two statutes completing the dependence and oppression of the working classes ; one of these classed under the head of conspiracy and punished with three months' imprisonment with hard labour, any measures taken by a workman to combine with his comrades with a view to obtaining an increase of wages ; combination being regarded as a criminal act. The other statutes visited with severe correctional penalties any breach of contract on the part of the workman. The master loudly proclaimed his intention to treat separately with each individual in search of employment, and to keep him, once engaged, to the conditions which a single man, without resources, could not refuse. The workman was not only circumvented and outraged, but humiliated and degraded ; law and customs combined to make him, in a very general way, a contributor to the public welfare. The Statutes of 1782 and 1796, by organising outdoor relief, made charity a complement of wages ; *i.e.*, it was not the wages which were increased by the play of economic forces, but the expenses of public charity ; the poor-rate went up enormously in nearly every parish, and industrial England offered the almost unique spectacle of a huge mass, not of free workmen, but of paupers, which the force of circumstances and the severity and hypocritical humanity of

the laws kept in a condition of misery to a certain extent official.

In 1815 public opinion in England had completely recovered from the effects of the Revolution, but Liberal doctrines did not regain their sway until 1820; between which date and 1823 they were manifested in several laws of enfranchisement of the strictly economic order. The last of these was passed in 1825; it allowed workmen to combine for the purpose of obtaining an increase of wages. But all this legislation, marked as it was by a high degree of comprehension of the conditions of commerce and manufacture, did not really benefit the lower classes. Legal penalties still visited any breach of contract with an employer, and workmen were exposed, indeed practically condemned, to the debasing effect of public charity in the form of outdoor relief. Their situation was more intolerable than ever, as the inquiries of the period bear witness. After the terrible report of the Commission of 1833 a kind of shame seized the community: it was recognised that the necessary reform could no longer be delayed. The law of 1834 perfected the system of workhouses: the sick and the old were collected together in these institutions; and, what was far more important, outside relief was prohibited. From this time forward, the question of wages was entirely separate from that of charity; and the rate fluctuated in accordance with the law of demand and supply. The factory laws completed the reform movement; one by one the industries were brought within the jurisdiction of the law, and the humane treatment assured to women and children which their helplessness prevented them from claiming. The series of factory laws is still incomplete. During the period which lasted till 1867 working men were in the position of a class rapidly on the ascendant; the fierce and brutal strikes common among them at the beginning of the century became more and more infrequent, and they began to form associations which the legislator pretended to ignore, but the masters recognised and

sometimes even acknowledged. It was the better-class workmen who constituted these associations, and their subscriptions by degrees built up a considerable capital, not unworthy to be ranked beside that of their employers. During the third of a century, extending from 1834 to 1867, legislation maintained the same course, and even the abolition of the corn laws must be regarded as a measure in favour of the masters. Nevertheless, the position and circumstances of the lower classes improved with incredible rapidity: their aspirations and pretensions increased; they enjoyed an elevated and tranquil consciousness of their value in the community, and largely merited the esteem and deference professed for them by statesmen in the Parliamentary debates.

The year 1867 was a memorable one in the history of the industrial classes; in this year, reform, brought about almost unconsciously by the Conservatives, invested them with electoral rights, followed by laws which still further emancipated them. A number of Bills in the interests of these classes were passed; evidence of the eagerness of the members to gain the favour of their new constituents. Between 1867 and 1875 the inequality, which in the eyes of the law existed between master and man, finally disappeared. Coalitions of working men were no longer threatened by the conspiracy law, and they had only civil suits to fear as a result of breach of contract. Penal actions were still in force, but were directed against the employer who failed in his legal duty towards his employees. Thus the parts were reversed: the stern attention of the legislator was devoted to the conduct of the master, who, in his turn, was liable to legal penalties for unfulfilled responsibilities. The trade unions were now recognised as having civil rights: for instance, they could prosecute a defaulting cashier in a court of law. From 1875 to 1889 the factory laws, particularly those in the interest of women and children, continued in force; but they gradually lost the character of academic regulations proposed to, rather than

imposed on, the masters. Two institutions ensured the efficiency of these regulations: inspections, which became more and more general, and the power of the Secretary of State to regulate the laws, which soon became extended to every department of the legislature. In 1889 a point which had first been considered in 1872 assumed a prominent position in the deliberations of the legislature, viz., sanitary regulations; it was determined that those regulations, the efficiency of which had been recognised, should be enforced throughout the country, and not left to the option of the inhabitants. Between 1889 and 1895 statutes were passed in quick succession, multiplying the precautions to be taken, heaping injunctions on the employers, and increasing *ad infinitum* the number of cases in which they laid themselves open to penal liabilities. Finally, in 1897, the law intervened for the second time in the matter of labour contracts; in 1880 a first attempt was made to modify the terribly conservative jurisprudence of the courts; and in 1897, for the first time, employers' liability was considered in all its bearings. *A priori*, the masters were made legally responsible for accidents, and compelled to make compensation if they could not prove that the workman, through some clumsy mistake, had been the cause and the victim.

The class which benefited by these laws was remarkable for certain qualities. First, it was the product of a natural selection exercised at the expense of the agricultural class. Only the strongest and most resistant had quitted the rural for the urban districts, and they were also the best and most honest; so much so that, up to 1840, pauperism and criminality were more frequent in the country than in the towns. They had another and no less laudable quality, that of temperance: the consumption of alcohol during twenty-five years did not vary in England in proportion to the population. In the almost universal progress of alcoholism this stationary position constituted an honourable exception. The nation which could thus stave off the two scourges of drunkenness and crime is most undoubtedly worthy of some consideration.

After the selection which separated the workman from the field labourer came that which separated the skilled workman from the ordinary mechanic. The working classes had acquired the position and qualities of a superior class: loyalty and fidelity to contracted engagements. They had also a very strong sense of what was due to them. They argued in forcible but perfectly polite language: so much we learn from the report on the inquiry made in connection with the mechanics' strike. They were also remarkable for a sense of dignity and a determination to accept nothing but their rights. At the International Congress at Aix-la-Chapelle, in May, 1896, a French revolutionary having claimed that the employer's liability ought to obtain in every case, even when the workman had committed some clumsy error, the English representatives indignantly protested against a theory which deprived the workman of the responsibility of his actions.

Their physical and moral qualities are not all. The prolonged operation of certain laws may also have helped to decide some tendencies among working men which would not have been developed under a different system of government. The peculiar and decided character which makes the English workman so striking a contrast to the workman of our country can be summed up in few words. In France, the political emancipation of the industrial classes dates from 1848; their economical emancipation only dates from 1864, and was not completed till 1884: it is therefore quite recent. In England economical emancipation dates back to the year 1828; after which the workmen waited patiently for almost forty years—until 1867—for the beginning of a political enfranchisement which was not complete until 1884. It is impossible to imagine two classes called upon to educate themselves, decide their tastes, and form their manners, in more diverse circumstances. Let us consider the consequences. In 1848 the French working men were provided, by the indiscretion of the legislation, with a formidable weapon, the law,

whilst for another sixteen years they were bound in the most absolute economic servitude; they had become accustomed to hope everything from class legislation, and to expect everything from the intervention of the State. The English working men had been accustomed, for forty years, to dispute such questions as the rate of wages, sub-contracts, piece work, overtime, &c., with their masters. They expended as much passion over these absolutely local interests, which did not come under the cognisance of the State, as if they constituted a law which set in motion all the national authorities. The French working men, when for the first time economic liberty was offered them, regarded it with a kind of contempt: they were already in possession of political liberty. They looked upon the new gift bestowed upon them merely as a weapon, and used it to threaten their masters. The English working men, when political liberty was accorded to them, had long been in enjoyment of the comparative freedom conferred upon them by the extra legal trade unions which, by sheer force of energy, they had made their masters accept, the Government tolerate, and the magistracy spare. They were obliged to divest themselves of their prejudices in order to comprehend and appreciate the fact, that the advantages they had obtained and maintained by an unceasing struggle could be confirmed and consolidated by the mere force of the law. The French masters had for a long time been accustomed, and even after 1884 continued to look upon those who took part in a strike as malefactors and rebels. English masters, on the other hand, treated them as free men who sought a legal means of bettering their position. Similarly, while the French workmen regarded the masters who withstood them as irreconcilable adversaries, the English workmen saw in them only honest manufacturers, who had good reason to protect their purses. After the understanding which terminated the conflict, friendly relations existed among our neighbours, whereas with us rancour, envy and even vengeance were only postponed to

the next occasion. In a word, the French regarded their economic rights, acquired too late, as a means of hastening the moment, still far distant, when they would realise their political day-dream. England did not place her hopes in so distant a future; her chief belief was in force, her chief desire to achieve results; when the working men received economic powers they became far more moderate; violent measures fell into disuse, and forms were observed. The industrial classes regarded the political future as too remote for present consideration.

We need not, therefore, be astonished that it was in the trade unions, which were occupied exclusively with the relations between master and man, that the working men displayed the most initiative. In each of these associations their activity was incessant, and depended largely on the secretary, who was their mouthpiece. We cannot gauge it merely by the strikes which broke out, but must take into consideration those which a skilful negotiation avoided, and the difficulties which were resolved by arbitration. In such contests as these the local union, as a rule, had only the master to deal with. The more widely extended it was by the amalgamations and federations of which it was the nucleus, the more it appeared to increase in power and influence; but, on the other hand, the greater the stake at issue, the slower and more impeded were its operations and the more liable they were to be disputed and interrupted, the members becoming conscious of the difficulty of reconciling their own differences of opinion and maintaining their union in face of a struggle. It is in their struggles with the employer that working men are upheld by the recollection of their heroic age; they displayed a rough sincerity, a disposition to call things by their names, and, at the same time, a good-humour, an absence of rancour and ill-will, which, disagreements once removed, assured the renewal of friendly relations in the new conditions created by a mutual understanding. This manner of settling their

disputes has become a habit of theirs; the law, if there be one which touches the matter, seems to them to furnish solutions too general for the local and special nature of the problem.

The questions or common interest which call for the solution of principles and form the subject of the laws relating to the working man, have been discussed in the Congresses of the trade unions which have been held without a break since 1868, the date of the first of these assemblies. At a first glance it is evident how small a part discussions play in the proceedings at these Congresses. To begin with there are a considerable number of expressions of opinion which, directly they have been given vent to, are put to the vote. It is what might almost be called the incendiary part of the work of the Congress which is treated with this indifference: the nationalisation of the land, a common stock of instruments of labour, &c., are examples of the rapid and superficial motions which are passed without arousing or arresting attention. Socialism appears only for the purpose of a rapid and decent burial. The same indifference may be remarked at the international Congresses. At the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1896, the English voted for the nationalisation of the mines, practically without taking part in the debate; in the same way they tacitly rejected the international Ministry of Industry proposed by the French; finally, the question of the working man's insurance was discussed by the Germans without provoking an acquiescence or objection on the part of the proved mutualists from the other side of the Channel. More important and interesting to the Congress is the work of the Parliamentary Committee. It is remarkable that its report contains no trace of a struggle of classes, it is essentially neutral, prudent, and pacific. A Frenchman, looking at the matter, could not fail to be struck by two things. First, the insignificance of the questions raised, the disposition of the Parliamentary Committee to be content with little, and to

concentrate their efforts every year on a few subjects, adjourning the others indefinitely. It is curious to note the satisfaction with which the Committee speaks of the Bills voted at a first reading, as if they were ignorant of the fact that it was a simple mark of courtesy which would not be taken as a precedent. It is equally curious to note the equanimity with which working men receive such a confession of impotence, as if the fact that the incessant activity of their Committee resulted in nothing hardly concerned them. It is unquestionable that, since 1875, the only law, outside some of the factory laws, of which it can be said that it was obtained by the Committee, is that of 1897, after an interval of twenty-two years. Is there not also occasion for some surprise in the fact that the miners of Northumberland recently raised the question whether there were not occasion to save the expense of a Parliamentary representation ; they consulted Mr. John Bright on the subject and he confirmed their view. The other point on which I wish to lay stress is the frequency of the formulas which sum up the practical part of a reform. The economists of the working classes are adepts at finding two or three words, the "three-eighth," "standard of life," "living wage," &c., which serve as a rallying-cry for the whole class, and also point out definitely and unmistakably the end they have in view, keeping it clear of principles which they could not understand, and general ideas of which they could but be suspicious. But how remote are these very general formulas from the detail of a precise law ! The initiative, too, rests with the middle and upper classes of which Parliament is composed. It is they who, slowly but with sustained effort, make a large number of partial laws, one after the other, consolidating them at lengthened intervals. No one really disputes the principle which inspires these laws : it is not even discussed as soon as proof is to hand that opinion is ripe and the nation has made up its mind. The vigilance of the Parliamentary Committee simply maintains it without endeavouring to force its operation. Thus we see them

displaying a tranquil activity, seeming in no haste to achieve a result, or to concern themselves with giving a definite form to the laws in which they are interested. That task devolves upon the classes who are practised in Parliamentary usages, and they accomplish it at their leisure.

This narrow and positive, egotistic and limited trade unionism has, in our time, undergone the test of a double transformation. On the one hand, amalgamated societies and federations have greatly increased and now number more than a million members. This is the reason why they are more powerful in the struggle, and yet more cautious at the outset; also why they have a higher standpoint and appreciate things in a less narrow and more comprehensive spirit. The second transformation, which has been in process of evolution for ten years, is the introduction of what is called neo-trade unionism. A new doctrine came into vogue with the general use of machinery. Wherever a machine has replaced the working man the skilled labourer has given place to the unskilled. There is no need for special training in order to be able to guide a mechanical apparatus, while a long apprenticeship is necessary to enable a man to accomplish with tools the work executed by such an apparatus. The result of this, is that the demand for skilled labourers has decreased, and the masters have evinced an inclination to replace them by ordinary workmen at a lower rate of wage. As a proof of this I need only mention the hostility exhibited by working men towards machines in recent years. What is even clearer evidence of the desideratum of the working men is, that they have gradually come round to demand that the machinery should always be placed in the charge of skilled labourers. It is nevertheless evident to what economical progress has led: a smaller demand for skilled labourers and a greater demand for ordinary mechanics. On the other hand, public feeling inclined towards the latter. In 1889, the dockers, ordinary labouring men hired by the day, fell out with their employers. Public sympathy was wholly on

their side, and they obtained an easy victory. This gave an impetus to the whole body of unskilled labourers.

Neo-trade unionism was remarkable in three ways. First, the new associations gave up all pretension to being friendly societies; their object was no longer to relieve the working man in cases of accident or illness; all their financial force was concentrated on promoting strikes. In the second place, the subscriptions were reduced to a very modest figure, proportionate with what a man receiving average wages could afford to pay. Neo-trade unionism was in this way reduced to the *rôle* of an engine of war, in connection with which only sufficient provisions had been laid in to last for a day. The working men were not retained in the society by their knowledge of the great capital they had contributed to form and could dispose of as they would. Finally, in the third place, neo-trade unionism was led by this very irresponsibility into formulating its desiderata more largely, and including more principles and general ideas in its programme. The events which followed its entry on the scene were not favourable to it. Between 1887 and 1894 a strong wave of feeling caused the unskilled labourers to combine, and a fair number of unions were formed with great hopes. But if we consider the present-day fruit of these hopes, we must admit that neo-trade unionism has proved wholly abortive. In 1894 the agricultural labourers in England and Wales constituted nine unions, with 6,600 members; in the following year they had only seven, with 1,000 adherents, while in 1898, they were but two in number with 171 followers. The mechanics' unions kept up their numbers better, although not without difficulty. In 1892 they had 100,900 members, and at the end of 1897 only 97,000 of these still remained. The transport industry decreased in almost the same proportion, from 154,000 to 147,300 members, while, in the same space of time, the building trades unions went up from 160,400 strong to 235,000 members; the miners from 315,000 to 352,000;

the workers in metal from 278,000 to 308,000; and the weavers from 204,000 to 213,000. Meantime but few of the older societies revised their rules with the idea of admitting the unskilled as members. No trace of this movement now remains, unless it be found in a better knowledge of the great problems and a practice of regarding questions from a more general point of view and seeking less narrow solutions to them.

It is difficult for a society with local, or, if not local, special aims, established for the purpose of promoting the interests of a community, to rise to the height of abstract principles; it is easy, on the contrary, and perfectly natural for the members of such societies to share the same opinions and beliefs. Socialism, so far as it is represented in England, is more remarkable in many centres by reason of the force of certain personalities than the number of their adherents or the results they achieve; this is the case, for instance, with the Social Democratic Federation, the Fabian Society, the Labour Church League, the English Land Restoration League and the Independent Labour Party. All these societies owe their inception to the teachings of Karl Marx and Hyndman between 1880 and 1883, and were founded subsequent to that date. Some of them are under the leadership of distinguished men, such as Mr. Sidney Webb, president of the Fabian Society, Mr. Barnes, of the Independent Labour Party, &c.; otherwise they would hardly have much weight with the nation. In vain the majority of them have cut out of their programmes the more abstract aims of Socialism; what still remains is sufficient to repel and hold at a distance so profoundly individualistic a nation. The Social Democratic Federation only numbers 11,000 members; the Fabian Society, which derives its name and methods from Fabius Cunctator, makes this an excuse for its tardy progress, at least to its own satisfaction; its sole object is the municipalisation of certain industries and it places itself in opposition to public feeling by demanding the admittance of the poor into the electoral body, and the confiscation of

property by a progressive taxation of entailed estates. The English Land Restoration League has the advantage of a special object, viz., the reduction of landlordism; its activity is displayed by numerous debates, which in one year recently reached the figure of 350. But the Independent Labour Party is the one most likely to throw dust in the eyes of a Frenchman by the impetuosity and hardihood with which it launches itself into controversy. Its programme includes almost every section in a perfect scheme of social reform, even outside the limits of a particular country; viz., the suppression of land monopoly, the nationalisation of railways and canals, old age pensions, the law of labour, and the extinction of war by arbitration. But there are strong reasons why it cannot gain the public ear: it takes up too many subjects for any one to seriously believe that it is likely to be successful in a single case. From the English point of view it is neither positive nor practical; up to the present day its meetings have never numbered more than 12,000 members, and when in the last electoral struggle it essayed to calculate its forces, the result was that not one of the twenty-two candidates it put forward were returned.[1] The 50,000 votes it possesses were unequally distributed among the thirty-nine constituencies in which they had been given in. In short, Socialism is never likely to make much of a figure in England, at least in the form under which it is known in France and Germany. The trade unions occupy the ground, and it is improbable they would allow themselves to be distracted from the immediate and practical objects they have in view, merely to lose themselves in space in the pursuit of unsubstantial dreams.

8. *The Religious Sects.*

The Churches and religious communities form a second

[1] These facts relate to 1895. The party does not appear to have had better fortune in the election of October, 1900: it sent in seven candidates, only one of whom was returned.

special group, quite as natural and full of life as the social classes. A curious antinomy forms the basis of their relations with the individual and the State. The faith which unites the members of this group forms a powerful support for "the liberty of the subject." The collective beings here encountered by public authority are not brought together by a temporal interest, comparable with, and inferior to, that of the State. Their aim, their goal, is the highest to which the heart of man can aspire. It is beyond the earth, above the skies. The civil powers can bring into competition with it only the most important of earthly interests, which are impotent to detach from it the imagination of those who have dreamed of it, the will of those who have vowed to attain it. Here we find a principle of energy, and a school of high independence. The man who has obtained a glimpse of the infinite stands erect; no threat nor seduction of things earthly can make him bend his head.

But if religious faith is in one sense an agent of liberty, in another it is an agent of tyranny. Intolerance is an essential feature of all belief based on the assumption of having grasped *absolute* truth and *absolute* good; for the very fact of their being absolute justifies the means employed to make them prevail, and to root out the sin and evil which obstruct their progress. This cynical idealism is particularly characteristic of dawning or new faith. Such faith has, what might be called the defect of its age, the imperturbable and pitiless logic of the adolescent. Sometimes, after a long series of reciprocal and futile persecutions between the churches, tolerance appears under the form of lassitude and disgust. It appears, but only for a while, if the society of the age happens to be a religious one; and after a period of relaxation oppression recommences. In short, all living religious faith has, like civil authority, a natural affinity for tyranny. The two powers instinctively draw near together, and nothing is more threatening to the liberty of the subject than such an alliance, when heavenly

interests and the welfare of the State are banded together against the individual.

An alliance of this kind was concluded in England in the sixteenth century. Henry VIII. had merely intended to effect a schism. Anglicanism was, as a matter of fact, simply Catholicism minus the Pope, with the king as spiritual head. The English accepted the substitution without a murmur; their hatred of the foreigner and satisfaction at having an "English God" concealed the danger from them. Later on, the Crown judged it wise policy to allow Anglicanism the support of the creed which at that time held Papistry in check throughout the whole of Europe, and Anglicanism became Calvinistic. But Calvinism in England was regarded by those who invoked its aid as merely a religious garrison, whose duty it was to defend a hastily constructed political institution. A degraded episcopacy placed its theology at the service of royalty. All this accorded with the interests and wishes of the civil power. On the one hand, the Church made use of the strength of the secular arm, and on the other, the State imitated the Church by claiming the right to search closely into men's consciences, and to chain down thought, in its habit of considering dissent as a crime. All resistance to ecclesiastical commands was treated as high treason, all opposition to the commands of the prince was regarded as sacrilege; nothing was wanting to render tyranny omnipotent, all-enveloping, and intolerable.

The energy of the Dissenters saved English liberty. They were not, either theoretically or instinctively, more liberal than the Anglicans; this they made clear in every place, and on every occasion that they found themselves masters, in Scotland, in Massachusetts, and in Connecticut. Authority, as they conceived it, had the charge of consciences, and a mission to constrain people to the right way of thinking. But the power was in the hands of their opponents; they needed liberty, and had to be content to form the bulk of the

army which, on two occasions, overturned an irreclaimable dynasty.

Under Charles II. there was a terrible recrudescence of persecution among the Dissenters: they were hunted down in the person of the Roundheads: the followers or partisans of Cromwell. Not until after 1688 did a first measure of tolerance come into force on their behalf. It was in this way that William III. discharged his debt to his political allies, and strengthened the irreconcilable adversaries of the fallen dynasty. It is noteworthy that at the same time, and to their great satisfaction, the Papists were more molested than ever. They would have protested to a man if the indulgence by which they profited had been set up as a general principle and extended to the Catholics. For reasons of an equally political nature, persecution recommenced against all the Nonconformists under Queen Anne. In the midst of these scandalous fluctuations indifference gained ground, and scepticism took possession of the upper classes. It was inevitable; religious liberty could only be established by a preliminary period of doubt and strong criticism. Scepticism formed, as it were, an atmosphere around the believers, enveloping, penetrating, and imperceptibly mitigating the excessive rigidity of their zeal. It had another merit: it threw into relief, sincerity, disinterestedness, and the social utility of serious conclusions, independently of the purport of the doctrines on which they were based. To the sceptic all religious beliefs are on the same footing and outside question, the value of moral motives and effects therefore is his sole concern, and for that very reason appear to him all the more striking, and set apart for attention and respect. This important change was the work of the eighteenth century. Towards 1750 the last hopes of the Stuarts and their partisans vanished, which was another reason why a more general tolerance should pervade the legislative system. Under George II. a first attempt was made to mitigate the severity of the laws in the form of bills of

indemnity; the Nonconformists were exempted *ex post facto* from the penalties to which they were liable for having filled offices closed to them under the law. Under George III. a sentiment of fidelity to the Hanoverian dynasty was common among all the religious denominations. State policy, therefore, had no longer a motive for enjoining intolerance. The philosophy of common sense and humanitarian sentimentality were both urged upon Parliament by the outside world, and forced it to mitigate the rigour of the law. The English Catholics, least favoured of all the denominations, were the first to reap a small benefit from this in 1778; then the Protestant Nonconformists of Ireland (1779), who, scattered among a Papist population, were led by circumstances to be the supporters of the Crown, and were admitted to official positions; then the Episcopalians of Scotland, who had been maltreated as partisans of the fallen dynasty; from this time forward they did not insist on praying for the Stuarts, and were protected against persecution. Finally in 1793 the Irish Catholics obtained the right to vote, and admittance to many official positions. In 1829 the act of emancipation granted to all Roman Catholics, without distinction, most of the rights hitherto denied to them, and consequently the English and Scotch Catholics obtained the benefit of civil and political equality—an equality now almost perfect. The secularisation of all civil and political appointments progressed in the same ratio. Quakers, Catholics, Dissenters, and Jews were successively admitted to municipal offices, and within the doors of Parliament, which now remained closed only to declared atheists. For the first time, a short while ago, an Israelitish peer took his seat in the House of Lords. A profession of Anglicanism was required only from the Sovereign and some great dignitaries. In 1837 and 1852 civil marriage was organised, and divorce cases and testamentary documents which had been under the jurisdiction of an ecclesiastical court, were transferred to a lay court (1857). The Universities and all their degrees were opened

to Dissenters, who up till now had been excluded from them. A clause, called the conscience clause, guaranteed religious liberty in the primary schools. Taxes for the maintenance of Church and State became optional. Interments in consecrated ground ceased to be the monopoly of the Anglican Church. It was a gradual transposition of the Church and the laity, and little was required to complete it. This movement was terminated, as must have been foreseen, and was inevitable, by the separation of the Church and the State, already essayed, and not without success, in Ireland. Henceforth no religious belief whatsoever was *legally* an obstacle or imparted a degree of inferiority to those who professed it; this was also true of the absence of all belief.

In short, in this country, where the supreme chief of the civil power is still the supreme chief of the Church, no remnant of theocratic despotism still exists. Liberty of conscience and creed are now as complete as imagination could conceive. The main point is that this liberty has not been consummated at the expense of religious sentiment. Faith has been attacked only on the outside of her fortress. Tolerance and faith seem equally necessary to these free people. A man who may not choose and profess his belief possesses only the half of his soul. Men who do not believe in the spiritual world will for years to come be found lacking in moral force. To the English, theology is not an object of contemplation and elevated thought; they believe it to be an inexhaustible source of strength, a bond which links their forces together and assures the efficacy of their united action. It is chiefly as a point of support that they seek it, and because this is so, the Englishman will always be more inclined to religion than to philosophy. Philosophy is light without warmth; religion is warmth without light, or with a chequered, reflected, and refracted light. But warmth is essentially movement, and a source of movement. The Englishman cares less for enlightenment than for strength, vigour, and progress, which is the

reason why this race, so pre-eminently active, have always held faith in the highest esteem. After a period of unbelief and rationalism, the Wesleyan movement stirred the nation to its depths. The Oxford Movement was less extended but of equal force. The only difference between the eighteenth century and our own is, that faith among believers is now pervaded by the sort of worldly wisdom which emanates from an ambient scepticism; it no longer dreams of conquering the world by force, nor does it aspire to an alliance with the State and the use of the secular arm. It reigns by force of persuasion and grace. It inspires and links together those who look above the world for the powerful and ardent motives governing their actions; and this is why State policy, a sublunary interest, has not the power to sway them. It is perhaps too much to say that a democracy cannot understand how to be free if it is not religious; but a democracy which has never ceased to be religious has certainly a superior capacity for resistance against the despotism of civil government.

CHAPTER II

THE STATE AND ITS FUNCTION AT HOME

England is generally conceded to be the country in which individualism has obtained the firmest and deepest hold. This is true if it is understood aright; but nothing would be more false and deceptive than to conceive the individual as powerful and equipped, and the State as feeble and uncertain of its rights; they must both be considered as having an equal consciousness of their strength, their sphere and their vocation.

Historically, this view is confirmed by the whole political past of England; in no other country is the idea of the State as sovereign so ancient and undisputed. As a consequence of the Norman invasion England almost immediately became an homogeneous nation and a relatively centralised country. In France the provinces were acquired by the King one by one, and on each occasion the treaties or charters granted to them confirmed their ancient liberties, or bestowed on them special immunities which tended to perpetuate the consciousness of their distinct past and separate interests. They were annexed rather than incorporated in the kingdom, and a revolution, which obliterated even their names, was necessary in order that they might become part of the national unity. In England the territory was acquired in the bulk. After the Conquest, the counties appeared as purely administrative divisions analogous to our *departements* and present-day *arrondissements*; they were

governed by one law, and few, if any, had special and remarkable privileges. In France, the great feudatories were quite independent, in fact sovereigns over domains almost as excluded and compact as the royal domain; each could entrench himself in his own little realm and defy the power of the King. They were overcome one by one, *cœpit vesci singulis*, and eventually the King became sole lord. The direct vassals of William I. received many small manors, scattered over the country from one end to the other; but not even the most powerful among them was strong enough to engage alone in a rebellion against the sovereign. From such an enterprise not one of them but would have come forth vanquished, unless he had combined with the others. Opposition could only be effective if concentrated, even as the power which it sought to overawe. In the thirteenth century it crystallised into a regular organ near the throne; viz., Parliament. In very early days the modern conception of the State exercising a sovereign authority over the whole territory, under the sole control of the deputies of the nation, unreservedly superseded in England the anarchical idea of the feudal hierarchy, which continued to exist in a greater or less degree in other countries, where it retarded and perverted a similar evolution. After careful study we cannot find that the central government has been so strongly organised in any other country since the Middle Ages, nor had a clearer consciousness, quite apart from the national character, of its mission and the unlimited extent of its power. It gave unequivocal signs of this, in the time of Elizabeth, in a multitude of paternal and circumstantial laws full of prohibitions and claims, which regulated matters of private interest even to the smallest details, giving extraordinary proof of the Socialism of the State. The most characteristic example of this legislation was the poor-rate. Whoever has turned over the leaves of the statute book of the period must have been disabused of the current idea that in England the State is a timid and

prudent power, uncertain of its rights and anxious not to exceed the narrow limits of its sphere.

Yet we do not expect to see this bold and omnipotent State practically superseded by individuals. Every time it attempted to create an office, for which money would be required, the citizens took the initiative, tied its hands, as it were, assumed control and prevented the creation of a bureaucracy. From the top to the bottom of the ladder of authority this spirit of baulked activity was visible. Whereas in France the indifference of the great vassals allowed the Court of Peers to become confused and lost to sight among a parliament of legists, from which a council of administrators was afterwards evolved, to the great advantage of the professional element, in England the parliament of lords became consolidated and perfected by the representatives of the smaller estates and towns, absorbed the officials of the palace and obtained supremacy over every other body political or legal. In France, the central authority multiplied and strengthened without ceasing, under names which varied with the period, the agents who represented it in the different localities, and eventually it instituted intendants, who were the precursors of our prefects. In England, the powers of the sheriff, a kind of elementary intendant, very powerful in the time of Henry III., were restricted and reduced from day to day, and where this official was gradually disappearing, the magistrates, who were simply private individuals receiving no salary and so extraneous to the bureaucracy that no administrative superior could be pointed out on whom they were dependent, had their prerogatives extended until the whole government of the county was in their hands. These magistrates, who were great lords and landed proprietors, were not in the beginning accounted capable of performing their functions unassisted, and, for the same reason that in France the bailiffs were authorised or rather compelled to allow themselves to be seconded by a professional assistant, the English magistrates, by the terms of

the commission delivered into their hands, were not allowed to hold a court without the presence of some one among them who belonged to the class of professional jurists. This was the object of what was called the clause of the *quorum*, in which were inscribed the names of those specially qualified whose presence was requisite to insure the legality of the deliberations. But whereas in France the nominal bailiff, indolent, or occupied with other cares, allowed himself to be supplanted in all his functions by his professional coadjutors, in England it was the magistrate, *i.e.*, the private individual, without capability or special qualifications, who gradually elbowed out his jurist colleagues. Since the beginning of the eighteenth century the quorum clause has included the name of every magistrate without distinction. The signification of these facts is perfectly apparent. They make us understand how it is a bureaucracy has not arisen or developed in England: it is not that the State had no clear idea on the subject, nor sufficient force and claim, but because every time there was occasion to establish an administrative office active private individuals offered to fill it gratuitously.

There were even offices which the individual was so anxious to obtain, and in the acquisition of which he so forestalled the State, that their unquestionably public character was lost sight of for centuries. This is why, up to our own times, there has been no public ministry to represent outraged and threatened members of society before the courts of justice, interested parties having supplied its place. In 1839 there were more than 500 voluntary societies whose object was the arrest and pursuit of criminals, in fact the fulfilment by individuals of the first duty of a civilised government. The rules of several of these societies contained articles of mutual insurance guaranteeing a partial compensation for losses caused by theft. It seemed to be taken for granted that the State was not constituted for the purpose of attending to such accidents as these, and that it was the duty of private individuals to

regulate their own affairs. Even in the present day what England has borrowed from France and Scotland is the shadow and name rather than the reality of public action. It was these early proceedings which exempted the English from maintaining a regular police. We may recall the remark of a personage who had been robbed on the high way: "At least," he cried, "we have no Marshalsea!" This exclamation would have been appropriate in almost any part of England. In 1839–1840 a law rendered possible the establishment of bodies of police in every county where they did not exist, but the farmers did not rise to the occasion, esteeming the precaution too costly, if not unnecessary. It was not until 1857 that a police system was made compulsory in each county and the public safety secured by the hand of the State.

The establishment of railways was permitted by the parliamentary tribune without reference to any minister competent to decide on such a question, just as if no public interest were involved in the decision, and it was solely a matter of reconciling two private interests, or giving a casting vote one way or the other. It was surprising to see these immense monopolies granted to perpetuity on very imperfect conditions and no adequate guarantee, either in the interest of the individual and commerce, or for the safety of travellers.[1] Similarly, the ports were for the most part in the hands of individual companies. Up till 1834 the Treasury did not expend a single farthing on popular education. Private companies, ancient corporations independent of the State, filled the duties of this great public office, which undoubtedly requires endowment by a higher power.

[1] For the last few years a competent minister has been called at regular intervals before the committees who sit on the questions of the railways. He has then an opportunity of giving his advice. Further, in certain cases he has now the right to determine such questions by a provisional order which is made permanent at the end of the Session if Parliament is not averse to it. In spite of these amendments, the organisation is in no sense bureaucratic; it is parliamentary in principle and judicial in operation.

What must be noted in these encroachments of the individual, as in those of the State, is that they have never encountered any objection based on the nature of the office. The State allows the individual all that the individual can and will take, whether it be public or private work. Even in the present day the offices it withdraws from, or denies to him, are only those which exceed the sphere of activity of a private individual, or demand a special and professional ability. We may further note that it is never a question of right between them ; the second point is the natural consequence of the first. Such a dispute as that which was raised in France over the surrender of the royal prerogatives of the State to mixed juries could not have taken place in England. It supposed a boundary philosophically and judicially determined between what is public and what is private. In England the only boundary is that which marks the point where the will or the capacity of the individual stops. The State solely occupies what the individual has abandoned through indifference or impotence.

Conversely, there is no province with clearly defined boundaries which belongs theoretically to private individuals alone, and access to which is, in principle, denied to the State. This is because no liberty in England has the character and prestige of an abstract and superior law. The idea of the natural rights of the man and the citizen is foreign to the British mind. Even civil liberties are, in the eyes of our neighbours, not the law of all society, but a historical fact peculiar to their country, not a right which every man coming into this world may claim, but the great heritage of a particular race, a legacy of the past, surrounded by glorious memories and maintained by an hereditary tendency towards activity and effort.

The absence of theoretical ideas, or the small esteem in which they are held in most English parliamentary discussions, has often been pointed out. The abolition of the censorship furnished a first noteworthy example of it. A Frenchman

would have looked in vain, in the parliamentary debate which was held on this occasion, for elevated ideas or lofty phrases regarding the part played by the Press, the progress, and the natural selection which takes place among opinions publicly stated and contested. The Englishman did not trouble himself with all these subtleties. He beheld a man entering his house and rummaging among his papers; this fancy occasioned him a kind of horror. The general warrant empowered the man to act in this way, therefore the general warrant must be suppressed. This and an infinity of other little negligible details, hindrances or difficulties, stains of rust which set off the type which had been kept standing too long, &c., were what these publishers had to encounter. Here is evidence of the feebleness of the faculty of abstraction, which could by a mental picture rise to the general warrant, but could not attain by the idea to the principle of the freedom of the Press. In the *Times* report of a debate held in the House of Commons in 1857 on capital punishment the principle of the inviolability of human life was not once mentioned. I have already recalled how in 1867 an eminent publicist, Mr. George Brodrick, set at defiance the opposers of the reform, then in preparation, by citing a single reformer who considered electoral franchise as a right inherent in the individual. In the article published at this period, as in those to which Gladstone's Reform Bill have more recently given rise, the only questions were, to preserve an equitable balance between the different classes, to obtain an enlightened parliament, and to propagate a healthy activity and interest in the public welfare among the lower classes of the nation. These entirely political considerations alone found an echo in the public mind. In such case where the idea of abstract rights had so little force and ascendency, considerations of utility had naturally the greatest weight. From whence arose the apparent antinomy, at bottom very easy to resolve, that England is the country where the sphere of activity of the State is usually

most restricted, and yet where State policy, when there is occasion to exercise it, has most authority and encounters least opposition.

The sphere of activity of the State was usually restricted because the activity of the individual was as a matter of fact very eager, energetic, and extended, and because the maintenance of each citizen's qualities of initiative and perseverance was looked upon as most essential for the public welfare, so that even State policy counselled authority to abstain as far as possible in order to leave the field free for private efforts. But, on the other hand, in exceptional cases, when there was a real reason why authority should intervene, its intervention was of necessity less scrupulous, more decided and more radical, than is elsewhere the case, because it came into collision, not with an idea of absolute and distinctly imperative right, but with venerable historical precedent.

This explains many curious lapses of respect for individual liberty ; for example, the press-gang, which was never legally abolished, and, at the end of the last century, was the terror of both town and country—inhuman captures of poor men, who were surrounded, driven to the waterside like a herd of cattle and finally transported on board the men-of-war, never to return. These operations were entrusted to agents of the State who did not even have to reckon with the habeas corpus, it being suppressed for the occasion. Thus, the respect for individual liberty and its most elementary guarantee were not able to balance for a moment the necessity of recruiting, at any price, the equipment of the fleet. The interest of the navy, so essential and vital for a nation which laid claims to the empire of the universe, easily triumphed over the unconditional and absolute right that each has over his own person, and practically established on the soil of England the methods employed to procure slaves in the land of Africa. This right, moreover, is not so conceived by the English mind, which regards it merely as a second interest,

in opposition to and on a level with the first, without other virtue or reason for preference than that of its utility. We might also cite those imprisonments, sometimes enduring for a lifetime, which were brought about without proof, on the bare oath of the creditor. In this case the State only intervened, as it were, as an obliging intermediary ; it did not fulfil the *rôle* which of right belonged to it, and made no attempt to control the legality of the prosecution and prevent tyranny ; it was only a summary executor supporting the will of the rich against the poor. A mitigation of this oppressive law resulted, between 1813 and 1820, in setting at liberty 50,000 persons.

The two examples I have quoted are taken from the past, but if I wished to find in the present a positive proof that the State has the same need of activity as the individual, and does not allow itself to be stopped by the superstition of any collective or individual right commanding respect, I shall only have to take and rapidly analyse the laws relating to public hygiene. England is, we have often been told, a country of decentralisation ; well, the local authorities are compelled, whatever the circumstances or cash at their disposal, to carry out the work necessary to procure an adequate provision of water for each habitation, and to secure the ejection of all waste matter by a proper system of drainage. If they refuse to take upon themselves this exorbitant expense they are arraigned before the court and served by a *mandamus* with the order to comply. In this way Lincoln, after a desperate resistance on the part of the Council and the majority of the inhabitants, found itself burdened with an expense of not less than £138,750. Coercion in this case was exercised only on a corporation, a moral entity. Is an individual case required ? Let us take the very frequent and ordinary one of an illness regarded as contagious—cholera, typhus, diphtheria, small-pox, puerperal fever, &c. At first it was enough to inform the authorities, at the moment of decease, of the illness which had caused it, and then the

most indispensable measures were taken. But in accordance with the law passed in 1887 the obligation to make a circumstantial declaration is imposed upon the head of the family, or, failing him, upon the nearest relatives who are in the house or taking care of the sick person; in default of relatives, upon any one charged with the care of the sick person, and in default of any such person upon the principal tenant. The doctor who has been called in to the sick person is compelled by law to inform the medical officer of health immediately, and the latter is obliged to visit the locality and house affected without delay, inquire into the cause of the illness, indicate the measures to be taken to avoid its spread and, as far as possible, assist in their due performance. He must endeavour to secure the isolation of the sick person. If this isolation appears impracticable at home and a hospital is within reach he must advise the conveyance of the sick person thither after consulting with the doctor in attendance. If he is of opinion that the house or any objects whatsoever which are in the house ought to be disinfected, the local authority compels the proprietor or tenant to perform the disinfection, which is carried out officially in case of refusal, and at the expense of the local authority if the parties concerned are too poor to pay for it. The local authority may even, on the notification of the sanitary officer, order the destruction of the bed linen and other objects infected, for which he indemnifies the proprietor.

If we consider the long list of illnesses covered by the statute and the still longer list of cases against which the legislator intended to provide, we must perforce recognise in circumstances which may be qualified as ordinary, the employment of a power of coercion which has no parallel in France: strict orders which leave no opening for the exercise of individual discretion, an almost complete denial of each man's right over his house and what takes place therein, and, finally, the insolent and arbitrary intervention of the officer of health, who prescribes by minute regulations which the law lays down

only in principle, all that ought to be done in the interest of the public health. He is like a skilled pilot whose presence suspends the rights of the captain ; the captain, in this case, standing for the mere citizen, master on board, and deciding his own affairs for himself.

It is in the matter of landed property that the absence of this absolute idea of right is chiefly felt, and we see how, in a sense, abstract principles may become protective and conservative. Throughout the whole of the United Kingdom the proprietary right of the landlord over the land is attacked by two sorts of enemies : first, by the various occupiers and exploiters of the soil (and here it must be remarked that this category of aggressors can only obtain satisfaction when the State acts as judge and sovereign arbiter) ; the proprietary right is also attacked by the State, on its own account, without the excuse of claims brought forward by private individuals whose interests it espouses. In the matter of landed property, therefore, the State intervenes twice and in virtue of two rights. It intervenes in its political character on behalf of individuals whose cause it adopts, and it intervenes in its judicial character for the satisfaction of its own claims and for its own aggrandisement.

Let us follow the fluctuations of the struggle in Ireland, Scotland, and England. It assumed a different aspect in accordance with the region the legal position of which was the question at issue ; for there was lacking to the law that inspired it the complete unity resulting from the right at which it struck. This right, indeed, was not founded on an abstract and general idea, nor was it everywhere the same ; but everywhere it was lacking in consistency, force, and authority.

In Ireland, the vague idea of an ownership in common between the head of the clan and its members, has been confused with the idea, to which the farmer has grown accustomed, of his right over the land he farms. The peasant

believes that his interest in the land is as worthy of respect as that of the landlord; he places the two interests side by side in working the property. Public opinion also was greatly divided when, in 1860, the law undertook to institute single ownership (which allows only one proprietor for each estate), and the right to enter into an agreement. These two conditions, which with us are a matter of common justice, were new law to Ireland, to which her customs rendered her averse. Ten years passed before she came round. In 1881 a new legislative measure returned to the paths of tradition by imitating the system which obtained in Ulster, in the principle of dual ownership (which allows two proprietors for each estate), and applying it to the whole of Ireland. The second ownership, that of the peasant, was manifested by the "three F's"—fixity of tenure, which aimed a heavy blow at the proprietor's right of eviction; free sale, which secured the farmer who left or was turned out the equivalent of his share in the property, paid either by the farmer coming in or the proprietor, in virtue of his right of pre-emption; finally, fair rent, which deprived the proprietor of the right to make his own scale of rents, which he had been at liberty to do under the former *régime*, and appointed an Agrarian Commission to settle equitably the figure of the rent to be paid. This system, instead of quieting the complaints of the Irish, made them louder than ever, for they conceived the hope of soon being able to eliminate the landlord altogether, by increasing their share in the property at the expense of his. This inexpiable struggle still continues. The Conservative Government endeavoured to put an end to it by a series of legislative measures; but although it has restored single ownership in principle, it could not undertake to upset the whole of the legal condition which successive statutes have developed around the opposing principle; in fact it was led into ratifying them and deducing new conclusions from them; several passages in its last law (1896) merely reproduce the provisions

of Mr. Morley's Bill, presented and rejected in the preceding year; further, it engaged in a vast landed and financial enterprise, the object of which was to transfer to the farmers the ownership of the estates they cultivated. The State began by advancing a part of the price to the purchasers, it now advances the whole of it. The repayment is effected in forty-seven yearly payments at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The Government thus endeavours to lure the desires and ambitions of the Irish into a new path; it aims at diverting them from political demands and making them forget Home Rule, by which they had been for a time intoxicated. In any case this enterprise, characterised by the creation of an agrarian fund, which England started by depositing ten million pounds, is nothing less than a friendly expropriation of the rural gentry, set on foot by the law and carried out with the assistance of public favour.

In Scotland the Government has observed the same policy in regard to the crofters who occupy some of the northern islands and the adjacent counties. In this case, too, the principles of entire possession and free contract have been violated in the person of the proprietor. The crofter, if he fulfils his obligations, cannot be turned out by the landlord, nor can his rent be increased; he must pay up arrears; a Land Commission decides, without appeal, on the cases of dispute between landlords and crofters, its authority embracing almost every detail of cultivation, particularly the improvements the crofter may have effected without consulting his landlord, and for which he demands compensation at the end of his tenancy. The tenure of the crofter can in no case be lessened, but it may be extended in consequence of an order, addressed to the proprietor, to let to the crofter the unoccupied land in the neighbourhood. In this case likewise the Commission intervenes. But what was most remarkable in the long debate which preceded the passing of the law was, that the right of property never figured therein, either as principle or objection; contingent circumstances—the condition of agri-

culture and the state of manners and customs—alone were taken into consideration. The chief care was to give satisfaction to the crofters in accordance with the comparatively old-fashioned ideas they had preserved up to the verge of modern times. This seemed the practical, positive, and expedient course, and this expediency inspired the speeches of every statesman and directed the operations of the legislator. In this respect there is no difference between Conservatives and Liberals.

In England the idea of clan, which implies ownership originally enjoyed by its members in common, is not only eclipsed, it is totally absent; but the principle of individual ownership, full and entire, has not thereby gained ground. The idea which presents itself to the legislator is that of mere possession, of a tenure, subject in principle to certain conditions which render it precarious. A discussion was recently raised between two distinguished legists on the question of whether the English were true proprietors or simply holders, and he who advanced the former argument could only repeat that, the pre-eminent dominion of the sovereign having disappeared, tenures were so nearly akin to full ownership that the two might be confused. However, the English, when they have to decide the legal position of estates, do not come into collision in any way with the solid and undeviating principle of full dominion. They have before them, nominally, an incomplete ownership, a possession which time and circumstances alone have rendered similar to full ownership. It is quite natural that so feeble and abbreviated a conception of the right of the landlord should offer but a feeble resistance to the eager desires and hopes of the farmers, and encourage them to believe that they too have a right over the land made fruitful by their labour and their money. The transformation of copyholds into freeholds by the redemption of manorial rights had already been to them a singularly suggestive precedent. At all events, the English landlords have not found themselves better prepared for a resistance of principle, when it is a matter of protecting the culti-

vator against the depredations occasioned by game, than when it is one of the permanent improvements he has made at his own expense. In this case, too, the liberty of agreement is openly attacked. At present there are rights which the farmer may not forego by contract, there are improvements which he may make unsanctioned by the landlord without losing his right to an indemnity determined by arbiters. Yet on learning the complaints of the class which has benefited by the law, and reading the propositions of the publicists, it would seem that the Act relating to agricultural tenures is only a timid introduction to more radical measures. The design to reduce the landlord to the condition of a mere debtee of a ground rent is perfectly obvious, and we may look forward to the day when, under the eyes of the impotent onlooker, the tenants will cultivate his estate in their own way and transmit it themselves from one to another.

This is not, however, the only threat hanging over landed property. Nearly seventeen years ago some influential political personages, Conservative as well as Liberal, expressed a desire that portions of land adapted for cultivation should be placed at the disposition of labourers in suburban districts. This idea was taken up by the legislator, and, in 1887, formed the basis of a measure afterwards extended to provincial districts. Every parish is now authorised, with the approval of the County Council, to compel the landlords within their circuit to let out lands to them, which they divide into allotments and sublet to urban or rural labourers ; and every District Council is authorised, on the initiative of the Parish Council, to obtain an order of expropriation from the County Council, and thus acquire by force lands which they let out on lease after a similar division into allotments. A resolution of even more importance was taken in 1892. The County Councils were authorised to acquire by amicable arrangement lands which they divided into small or middle-sized lots, not exceeding fifty acres. These lots, which correspond in size to every degree of condition of

the peasant proprietor, are destined, in the idea of the legislator, to reconstitute the class of yeomen which the political oligarchy of the eighteenth century caused to disappear. Exceptionally favourable terms were granted to the purchaser for the payment of the purchase money. The Council were also authorised to advance four-fifths of the purchase money to tenants who desired to acquire the lands they cultivated. The Government lent the necessary sums when required. It is true the legislator has protected himself, at least for the present, against the abuse most to be apprehended. He makes it a condition that every such transaction shall be arranged on the basis of a price or rate of interest sufficient to cover all expenses. Further, he has prescribed minute formalities, establishing a complete hierarchy of control, which ascends from the District Council to the County Council, and from the County Council to the Local Government Board, or even to Parliament. Nevertheless, it is to be feared that even such curbs as these will hardly restrain the pressure of the three local assemblies when they combine. Henceforward these assemblies were elected by a suffrage which closely resembles and cannot but become still more akin to universal suffrage. It is in fact to people, the majority of whom do not possess the land, that a right of expropriation has been granted against those who do possess it. The local councils will indubitably hasten to demand an extension of their powers ; they will be urged to the attempt by their constituents, and pledged to it by the legislator himself. The Act of 1892 in particular contains a tacit but unmistakable acknowledgment that the present *régime* of land property is abusive and contrary to public interest, that the economic work of the eighteenth century has, at the very least, gone beyond its object, and that a remodelling is necessary. It is perfectly apparent that this *mea culpa* will be heard, and some day the suggestion may well serve as the rallying-cry of reformers, more impatient than the present legislator and more inclined to pursue their ends by radical methods.

Up to this point the State only intervened as a political sovereign authority, whose endeavour was to allay, by a new division, the irritable grievances which it could only but inflame; the time now comes when it enters on the scene in its own personality and loudly declares its claim to become one of the interested parties in this property, the possession of which it had usually left to others. Towards 1848 John Stuart Mill said "These are the reasons which form the justification, in an economical point of view, of property in land. It is seen that they are only valid, in so far as the proprietor of land is its improver. Whenever, in any country whatsoever, the proprietor, generally speaking, ceases to be the improver, political economy has nothing to say in defence of landed property as there established. In no sound theory of private property was it ever contemplated that the proprietor of land should be merely a sinecurist quartered on it." This reasoning might serve to justify the farmer's contention against the landlord, and the worker's contention against the idle; but John Stuart Mill pushed it too far. He proceeded to assign to the State, under the name of unearned increment, all the surplus revenue which is neither a result of the industry of the landlord and the farmer nor of the employment of their capital, and is simply produced by time and circumstances. This theory furnished the point of departure for the physiocratic doctrines of Henry George, which were adopted in England by Wallace, the emulator of Darwin. It prepared men's minds to receive these doctrines, and contributed largely to their success. It lies at the root of the nationalisation of the soil, a formula which constantly figures in the programme of the congresses of the trade unions. This theory goes right down to the economic basis of individual property. Property is individual, and must remain so as long as society finds what it expects in the proprietor as an individual; but when the individual fails in what is expected of him, society has no longer any reason to support him; all it

has to do is to take away from him the right of property, which it assigns to the State.

More significant still, because in a sense more abstract, is the theory which the then Chancellor of the Exchequer—Sir William Harcourt—put before Parliament as a justification of his progressive tax on succession. It was no question of economic interest, but a right of the Crown which gave rise to it. The right which the State possesses over the accumulated property of the deceased, the minister said, is antecedent to any other. Nature, indeed, gives man no power over his terrestrial goods beyond the terms of his natural life. The right of a dead man to dispose of his goods proceeds solely from the law, and the State has power to stipulate the conditions and reservations under which this right may be exercised. The right to make a will, he also said, is a creation of the written law. In default of testamentary dispositions the State determines the destination which must be given to property.

The effects of the law after it had been in force for two or three years were as threatening as these declarations were peremptory. The opponents of Sir William Harcourt sincerely believed that the new fiscal system would not yield the results expected of it. Sir William Harcourt himself was not very sure of a superior value. The proceeds of the tax equalled and soon exceeded expectation: the first year it yielded only a million pounds, having been in force but partially for seven months; but the following year it put into the coffers of the Treasury more than fourteen millions, a figure which was soon surpassed, for in 1898–99 the receipts attained the extravagant figure of £15,563,000 sterling. The memory of this fortunate miscalculation will never be effaced; it will be present in the mind of every financier who endeavours to find a taxable subject unlikely to disappear, and taxpayers who cry out for form's sake. These are qualities which strongly recommend a tax at a time when the increase in all the Budgets, resulting from the expenses of the Army and Navy, place

statesmen under the necessity of finding new sources of revenue.

But it is specially in its relation with the Established Church that the State has exhibited the lofty consciousness of an omnipotence before which the most inveterate rights and venerable traditions give way. Ecclesiastical property had for centuries been subjected to a legal *régime* which the Government undertook to re-model. State policy and Socialism have perhaps never received more sureties than on this occasion. The Anglican Church, considered as a whole, is not qualified to hold possession. Bishoprics, chapters, livings, and benefices, as represented by their incumbents, each have a separate civil personality, and they only can be proprietors. What is called the property of the Church is only the arithmetical sum of all these private properties, and the Church as a whole has no more right over the glebe and tithes of any parson whatsoever than over the estates of any squire, be he who he may. It is only by a misuse of language that any one could be led to believe that the lands, capital, and revenues possessed by ecclesiastics are, in any degree, part of a collective property or great domain belonging to the Church.

In principle it appears that the State has no more right than the Church over such properties of the latter as have been legally and regularly acquired. As a rule these properties were donations made by private individuals to a living, or a certain community, or else they are grounded on immemorial rights held by the Church for centuries. Such was the case in France under the old *régime*. There was a strong feeling against the attempted spoliation in and after 1789, which placed the properties of the French Church at the disposal of the public Treasury. The respect and consideration with which religious foundations are surrounded in England was brought forward as a contrast to this act of violence. This was a complete mistake. The most distinguished British statesmen

have not hesitated to declare that all ecclesiastical goods are the property of the State. These were the very terms made use of by Lord Palmerston, and he gave it as his opinion that the legislature has the right and power to do with these goods according to the necessities of the moment. If people, said Lord Coleridge on his part (1870), make a donation to the Church, and the Church accepts it, the donation is made and accepted subject to the sovereign control of the State, and in accordance with the conditions determined by the State in every age—conditions which are liable to modification by the power which determines them. This theoretical declaration did not end the matter. The administration of private estates was removed from the lawful possessors and placed in the hands of a higher Commission, in which a number of secular members, especially the principal ministers, began by figuring, but which was afterwards chiefly composed of ecclesiastics. The Commission was appointed to make a new division of the lands or revenues thus collected together, curtailing the inordinately large and adding to the inadequately small : conscientiously elaborating a more equitable distribution. This task was accomplished to the great advantage of the Church and the country. Following this evolution step by step, and minutely analysing its processes, is it not, for a certain class of property, precisely that economic revolution of which the Socialists dream for all classes of property ? The fortunes of private individuals declared to be in principle the property of the State, taken back from its holders, administered by a bureaucracy : the revenues divided anew by a higher authority, not in proportion to existing rights, but in proportion to necessities in accordance with justice and conjectured expediency ; what more do the disciples of Henry George in the United States and England demand ? The English Parliament, with perfect tranquillity, has furnished them with an example and most encouraging precedent under the form of a law-type which, up to the present, is special, but which could be applied

to-morrow without any change of phraseology to the *latifundia* of the great English landowners.

These examples are dangerously attractive to the legislator, all the more so because circumstances seem made to dispose him to take advantage of them. The position is not without a certain gravity in the present day, when civilisation has multiplied and complicated the wants of mankind, while the superfluity of comforts and enjoyments has gradually deadened, in a whole section of society, the inclination for earnest and unprofitable activity. The statutes are as circumstantial to-day as in the past; the legislative intemperance of Parliament is not yet of that order which touches on everything, but what it does touch on it expressly regulates in the smallest detail. Further, a bureaucracy unknown in preceding centuries has begun to be organised, its justification being not only the increasing number and extent of public offices, but their increasingly complete and technical nature, which demands a special training and professional knowledge on the part of those who would fill them. The future is therefore not without a cloud. Yet has not the English legislator already been seen to retrace his steps and re-establish the liberty he had for a moment sacrificed? For instance, a law which, for the protection of a certain class of individuals, authorised the inspection of women by the agents of the police was recently revoked; and, in the same way, after the enormous success of vaccination, Parliament's first step was to prevent those who objected from being compelled to undergo it, by declaring it optional.

In short, the intervention of the State is rarer in England than in France, and doubtless it will never become so universal there as in our country, because the extraordinarily active temperament of the English people renders it, as a rule, useless and unwelcome; but when it is exercised the effect is less disturbing. The State intervenes with less hesitation and in a more absolute form than in France, because what it has to face

are contingent facts, not imperative principles; a venerable possession not a sacred property. If the great qualities of the English character—energy, the passion for action, and the desire for responsibility—become weakened by lapse of time England will not be as well protected as we are against the exaggerations of a State Socialism, which these forces alone keep within bounds, and which will never be faced by the great abstractions, the cult of which in France is an inveterate tradition.

CHAPTER III

THE STATE AND ITS FUNCTION ABROAD

The State has a similar ideal abroad and at home ; the motive is the same, but the consequences seem reversed. In essence the duties of the State may be summed up in one : to do everything in its power to procure for the nation the largest possible amount of the species of happiness it prefers. Now in England this happiness is action. Consequently, nothing is more natural and harmonious at bottom than the two ideas, apparently contradictory, which the English profess regarding the *rôle* of the State at home and abroad. At home and towards the citizens they desire it to be prudent, circumspect, and even passive ; abroad and towards foreign nations they desire it to be active, easily offended, jealous, and ever ready to raise difficulties. This is because the State cannot intervene at home without restricting the field of action of each individual ; abroad it must intervene in order to keep open and continually extend his field of action in the five sections of the world. Every step taken by the Foreign Office is towards this end. "Foreign affairs," said Disraeli, "are the affairs of the English with the foreigner." It is, therefore, at bottom the same sentiment which restrains the State at home and prompts it to interference abroad.

The world to the English is like an immense motive for exertion. Hence the two types of statesmen who are in opposition to each other, and alternate in power. The first

is represented by such personages as Sir Robert Peel and, more especially, Gladstone. The school of Manchester imbues them, sometimes in spite of and unknown to themselves, with its doctrines; it gives the keynote of their politics. They intend to remain the masters of the world by the sole excellence of a production on which they concentrate all their resources and care; their sovereign good is peace, which opens all the markets of the world to their merchandise. Peace, free trade, and the good-will of nations one towards the other, characterises and sums up their method of conducting affairs. They fear, instead of desiring, an extension of the Empire; they foresee in it a source of new perplexities, of daily difficulties with other nations; they would readily give up the Ionian Islands[1] and the Soudan and recognise the independence of the Transvaal. They believe they have something better to do than to add to their territories—which means the multiplication of occasions for disagreement and strife—viz., to diminish by every possible means the net cost price of English products, and to master the whole of the inhabited world, not by force of arms, but by cheapness.

The other type of statesman has always been in favour with the Tory party. Palmerston, who was a moderate Whig, Disraeli, and Lord Salisbury sum up the principal traits of the character. They believe that the Englishman may be well off with other people, but that he will be still better off at home, and consequently there ought to be no hesitation in extending the frontiers of the British Empire. To this end they employ an unscrupulous diplomacy, and, at need, arms. Throughout the universe they may be heard answering the weaker nations in sharp, incisive tone, an echo of which still sounds in their voice when they come into contact with the stronger nations. Wherever their interest is concerned they claim it as we should a right sanctioned by a solemn treaty. They make themselves hated by every other nation, and this they know and glory in. They are the chosen people, the pre-ordained masters, the

[1] TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.—The Ionian Islands were ceded to Greece in 1864.

appointed protectors of the weak. They feel that, in this character, they ought neither to commit themselves with their inferiors nor become over-much entangled with their equals. A "splendid isolation" is natural to them. At bottom, it is in the Tory method of procedure that the true heart of the nation is to be found, and though at times it may wander, it always returns thither in spite of utilitarian statesmen.

This is what came to pass with Gladstone. He entered, without willing it, upon the venturesome, long-aspersed paths of his illustrious opponent. As the *Pall Mall Gazette* said in 1884: "Here we have a Cabinet which, when it arrived at power, was animated by the passionate desire to restrict our responsibilities and lighten the burdens of the Empire. No one, even in the Opposition which makes an everlasting crime of its desire to diminish rather than enlarge the Empire, can throw a doubt on the sincerity of the Cabinet. It has sought to rid itself honestly of the burden which, like a new Atlas, it bears upon its shoulders. It has evacuated Candahar and abandoned the Transvaal. No English Cabinet has ever given such proofs of its desire to stay the aggrandisement of the Empire. Yet it has increased, and increased more rapidly under Mr. Gladstone than under Lord Beaconsfield. We have not annexed Egypt, but we hold a garrison there; we have not absorbed the Soudan, but an English army is on the road to Khartoum. We have annexed a third of Zululand, the whole of Bechuanaland, and all the coast of South Africa from the Orange River to Cunéme, with the exception of Angra pequeria. We have rounded off our possessions in West Africa by the annexation of a belt of coast near Sierra Leone. We had sanctioned the annexation of Cameron, but the Germans having anticipated us in taking possession, we found a compensation in the annexation of the delta of the Niger. We have established a new East India Company in the northern part of Borneo, and to-day we have given the order to pro-

claim the British protectorate over the eastern half of New Guinea. This has no parallel in our times. There is not another nation in the world which can offer a similar phenomenon. England takes to expansion, and the more she is restrained by her rulers the more she tries to extend herself. In presence of this great universal movement Mr. Gladstone, in spite of the almost absolute power which the nation has entrusted to him, in spite of his almost passionate desire to stand still, is as powerless as a child. The expansion of England escapes the will of those who govern her."

If the *Pall Mall Gazette* had made a general review of the English acquisitions, it ought to have spoken of Cyprus, which became an English island by a secret agreement (1878), made public at the Treaty of Berlin. If it had included our own times it ought to have mentioned the conquests of the Soudan, Zanzibar, Uganda, and Matabeleland — all now English provinces—the Transvaal deprived of its independence, and the English possessions at the mouth of the Niger recognised by a treaty with France, who, threatened at Fashoda, was obliged to surrender Egypt and her dependencies. In short, two-thirds—and the best part—of the African continent are occupied not only by the interests, but by the troops of the British Empire. In this summary review, which only takes account of the great facts, we should perhaps pass over in silence Wei-Hai-Wei and the province of Shantoung, which make England one of the heirs-presumptive of China. The Tory system has decidedly carried the day in the councils of England, and is arrogantly displayed over the whole surface of the globe.

In short, the Anglo-Saxon race, eager for action, with difficulty endures even the semblance of indolence and renunciation in the collective entity which bears its name. It does not desire to be conqueror merely in fact, but also ostensibly active, exacting, and menacing. It is pleased that it should have a certain quarrelsome combativeness. The policy

of results does not content it. When Palmerston said that man is a combative and quarrelsome animal, he defined himself, and not only himself, but every statesman whose policy is likely to obtain the unconscious and ardent sympathies of the English people. The caprices and litigious ardour of this disagreeable, bad-tempered person responded to something in the profoundest depths of British egoism. That is why he was so popular, or, to put it better, so national. Further, the inability to conceive principles in the independence of their absolute form introduces into the foreign policy of the English the ingenuous lack of probity which forms a most singular contrast to their clear-sighted morality in private relations, the pitiless "each-for-himself," the harshness to the weak, and the lack of justice and generosity, of which they have too often given proof. The more contemplative races rapidly obtain the idea of man in general, and this idea gives rise to another—that of a consolidated humanity, each member of which has a right to a uniform treatment at the hands of all the rest. This absolutely ideal conception they bring to bear more or less upon the relation of nation to nation. They consider each state more or less as a member of the great human family; they enjoin upon their government more or less the duties of honour, loyalty, and justice towards other nations; they even delight in their being sometimes disinterested, generous, and chivalrous, and are with them heart and soul when they thus play the dupe. The sentiments of France towards Poland, oppressed Italy, and even Germany, torn by internal disagreements, are comprehensive examples of this contemplative philanthropy. The English know nothing of it. The idea of industrious and fruitful activity occupies all the avenues of their minds, and any idea incompatible with it they will not entertain. They do not conceive the State in any sort of way as one of the members of a vague humanitarian federation; to them it is simply a powerful organ of protection and security for a certain group of associated workers; and, as in every financial

company, the members intend that the council of administration—in this case the Government—shall conceive its duty solely towards them, without a thought to the public. Therefore, while the sentiment of national solidarity has more vigour in England than in any other country, the sentiment of human solidarity or of the sympathetic unity of the civilised world is completely absent.

The Englishman—I have described him elsewhere and will not repeat myself—is unprovided with physical sensibility ; he has, therefore, no sympathy, but he is nevertheless capable of rising to a sincere sentimentality, to which Christianity lends its force. To this sentimentality was due the passing of the two great measures which abolished the slave trade in 1807, and slavery in 1833. But we must not be surprised if during the same period we encounter in individual cases examples of impassivity and barbarity, giving the lie to the supposed sentiments of the bulk of the people with regard to these two laws, which were unanimously demanded and approved. In Jamaica, on the first signs of insurrection, the English organised the most cruel man-hunts against their late slaves ; army officers appeared to delight in these undertakings as a sort of sanguinary sport, and some of them even boasted of monstrous acts which they had not committed. In Africa Jameson, one of Stanley's lieutenants, demanded or received permission to be present at a cannibal feast ; a little girl was seized, dismembered, and ripped open before his eyes without his moving a finger to snatch her from her fate. The double circular of the Disraeli Cabinet in 1875–6, which took away from slaves the rights of refuge on English ships, was finally rejected by public opinion, but the mere thought that it might be accepted without exciting objection indicates that a whole enlightened section of the nation did not recognise the authority of the principles, and only admitted them for the sake of decorum.

With regard to the conquered races who retained some sort of footing in their own lands, the conduct of the English

has not been very different. In no single instance, neither in Canada, the United States, India, nor Egypt, have the English mingled with the natives and formed a mixed race ; they only understood how to destroy or make use of them. The first of these two solutions they applied to the Redskins, the second to the Hindoos, and both alternately to the Irish. Burke has described with picturesque eloquence the young English officials who burst upon India with all the avarice of the century and the impetuosity of youth : the natives had nothing to look forward to but the indefinite and hopeless prospect of birds of prey and of passage continually swooping down upon them with ever eager appetites. And, in order that there should be no misconception in the matter, Burke adds that, having rapidly acquired a fortune by these criminal methods, the Englishman, on again setting foot on his native soil, re-assumed the virtues which caused him to make the most noble use of this scandalously acquired wealth in such a way that the working man and the labourer blessed the just hand which in India had snatched away the linen cloth from the loom, depriving the Bengal peasant of his scanty portion of rice and salt. At the time of the insurrection of the Sepoys a young officer named Hodson took upon himself to condemn and execute the princes of Delhi, who, through treachery, had fallen into his hands ; and McCarthy testifies that this act was generally appreciated in England as "praiseworthy and patriotic." When the news of the bombardment of Alexandria was made public in the House of Commons the declaration was received by an outburst of spontaneous and resounding joy—"a ringing cheer," such as might have been expected from schoolboys at an exhibition of fireworks, not of an assembly of intelligent, Christian men who had just been told that a town of two hundred thousand souls had been deliberately fired upon and bombarded. The same indecent joy was manifested by the Tory party when a telegram from Captain Plunkett was read before the House to the following effect :

"Don't hesitate to shoot if necessary." It was the equivalent of another telegram which made some noise in its time: "Shoot me these people." But besides the fact that Challemer-Lacour, who wrote these regrettable words, might have been a prey at the time to the intemperate passions which are the result of a civil war succeeding a foreign war, we may say that the message was received in the French Chamber only by men who had made up their minds either to condemn him severely or to make a humble apology to him. They were not a hundred political men, habituated to self-control, who manifested by exclamations they could not keep back the fundamental basis of a natural barbarity. These men evidently considered the Irish not as fellow-creatures, but an inferior race against whom anything was permissible.

But the English do not merely consider or feel themselves exempt from the duties of humanity towards other nations; where such are concerned they break the rules by which long habit has bound them and the principles which they consider their special heritage and make their boast. The revelation of civil liberty was granted to them in early days; they have brought the protection of the law to a singular perfection; they have recognised on British soil the rights of prisoners and accused. Well, all these rights and sureties, which reverence for the past would seem to protect, vanish into thin air directly it becomes a question of benefiting men of another race. I need not go back so far as Warren Hastings; sixty years ago we find in a distinguished statesman, ex-member of the Cabinet and ex-ambassador in Russia, this singular absence of scruple. Appointed governor of Canada, Lord Durham arrived there accompanied by a law which expressly limited his powers. He had barely set foot in the country when he ordered the prisoners in his hands to be sent to the Bermudas, and declared that any who had gone into self-imposed exile would be liable to the death penalty if they returned to the colony. This, as Lord Durham knew perfectly well, was totally at variance

with common law and even the most elementary common sense. Lord Durham could not legally transport any one to the Bermudas and had no authority to delegate to the officials in the Bermudas which would empower them to detain any political prisoners whatsoever. Neither had he any right to declare that any prisoners whatsoever who returned to the colony should undergo capital punishment. There was not a single English law which regarded a convict's return even to England as a capital crime. Both these actions were a flagrant contradiction of English law, but Lord Durham did not regard them in that light. From the day when he had quitted English soil to enter upon Canadian soil he looked upon himself as a dictator and acknowledged the restraint of neither text nor precedent; he felt at liberty to go to the length of the most absolute despotism without exciting any objection. A political cabal was formed against him in England, but it did not prevent this "Lord High Seditioner," as the *Times* called him, whose last act in Canada was to appeal to the feelings of the colony against the conduct of Her Majesty's ministry, from being welcomed at Plymouth with all the enthusiasm which a victorious Nelson or Wellington would have received.

In like manner, after the riots which took place in Jamaica, in the time of Governor Eyre (1865), the latter arrested a citizen of the name of Gordon. He had him transported from a district where the ordinary law still obtained to one where martial law had been established. There the unfortunate man found a court formed in total disregard of the law and without any legal authorisation. He appeared before this court, which judged him on inadmissable evidence and condemned him to death. This sentence was ratified by the Government. Eyre, who was removed by a committee of inquiry in consequence of these illegal acts, returned to England. There, while one committee was formed to attack him, another was constituted in his defence, the latter includ-

ing the most illustrious names in England—Carlyle, Tennyson, Ruskin, &c. The Government refused to bring him to justice, the Grand Jury invariably rejected the demands for prosecution, and the Treasury reimbursed him for the expenses which these rash law suits had cost him.

The remark has been made that many of our most extreme Revolutionists and ruthless Jacobins might have been faultless officials, affectionate fathers of families and kindly neighbours, had it not been for the great events which plucked them from the conditions of everyday life. In the same way, the Englishmen I have mentioned were and might have remained scrupulous, liberal, and humane personages if they had only had to do with their own countrymen. Once having passed the frontier—only St. George's Channel—and brought face to face with strangers, they felt themselves as it were freed from every-day morality. They were outside the grip of national solidarity, and yet had not entered into that wider kingdom governed by the sentiment of human solidarity. Their actions had no law but that of interest, and for what they might do a public opinion could always be found ready to absolve them.

We have hitherto observed the English only at home or in their own colonies, struggling with races conquered beforehand, whose independence was swallowed up in the immensity of the Colonial Empire. But the whole foreign policy of the English Government, both in the theory and practice of international law, bears the same stamp. Loyalty, veracity, humanity, and generosity towards the weak are with them "truth on this side of the Channel, error on the other." I will not go back to the seizure of the Spanish vessels before the declaration of war, nor to the bombardment of Copenhagen. But in more recent times how can the conduct of the Cabinet of Westminster towards Greece in the Pacifico affair, or the unwarrantable injury which gave rise to the first war with China, be recalled without shame? This un-

scrupulous policy was not merely excused, but even honoured in the person of Palmerston in the General Election of 1857, when nearly all those who had criticised the policy of the ministry lost their seats in Parliament. Two years afterwards Palmerston was compelled to retire owing to the adverse voting of the House, which had been elected in his own image, he having allowed it to be understood that he was disposed to comply with the demands of France in regard to the plots hatched on British soil against the foreigner, and he dared not again appeal to the nation in the matter. This is a striking example, but less so perhaps than that of Mr. Chamberlain, of which I shall speak later.

It need not cause surprise that such tendencies should not only be felt in practice, but also appear more or less in the theories of jurisconsults regarding the law of nations. A recent book, that of M. Dupuis, on maritime jurisprudence,[1] furnishes several instructive examples in support of such considerations. The Englishman approaches questions regarding the law of nations in a very different spirit from ours. He is openly averse to the multiplication of absolute principles, and the strict application of exact rules proceeding from these principles. Abstraction causes him a kind of embarrassment and uneasiness, he dreads lest abstract opinions should govern him and force him to certain conclusions : he intends to keep his liberty. This is why he admits at most a vague and very comprehensive principle, drawing from deductions, which he modifies in accordance with circumstances ; he resolves the greatest problems as if they were questions of individual cases.

At the end of the last century we appeared very eager to adopt Rousseau's axiom : to wit, that war exists between the military forces of the states and not between their civil elements. In other words, in Rousseau's eyes, the soldier

[1] Ch. Dupuis, "Le droit de la guerre maritime d'après les doctrines anglaises contemporaries," in-8° (Paris, 1898).

alone is an enemy and ought to be treated as such ; the private individual being a sort of neutral who ought to have all the advantages of such a position. This ingenious antithesis interested, captivated, and convinced us, in consequence whereof we found ourselves pledged to the observance of two contradictory rules, and were drawn into conclusions which did not harmonise with French interests. The abstract and subtle conception of Rousseau had no power over the English mind, which rejected it in its entirety, only admitting one principle, that of the state of war, and accepting the consequences thereof as affecting private individuals as much as the State. Thus it has come about that the British Government hems private individuals in with very strict regulations, which it can alternatively enforce or relax in accordance with circumstances and the interests of the moment. France and most of the other Powers have risen to an increasingly broad and general conception of the position of neutrals ; they looked upon the case of the belligerents as an exception, and took measures to restrict this exception as much as possible. During the whole course of the nineteenth century their efforts constantly tended to localise the necessities of war—*e.g.*, to allow the commerce of the neutrals to circulate unhindered around the vessels engaged in the struggle. The English method proceeds from a totally different conception. The English belligerent only beholds the commerce of the neutrals as an inconvenience it is necessary to avoid, a danger it is necessary to anticipate ; he regards commerce as the exception ; the condition of the belligerent appears to him to be the rule. Now let us look at the consequences : France reduces the list of objects which constitute the contraband of war as far as possible ; she only allows arms and ammunition—or at most rice in her quarrel with China ;—she publishes this list at the beginning of hostilities and does not touch it again. England includes in her list, besides the objects enumerated in the French list, an indefinite quantity of commodities which might be useful

in carrying on the war or in the maintenance of the belligerents; this list is not closed, and an order from the Crown can complete it at any time. France only allows the strictly effective blockade, which is necessarily limited to certain points on the coast; England, on the other hand, allows a blockade which may embrace a long line of coast. France permits only vessels taking a part in the blockade to pursue a ship which tries to force the passage; England permits any vessel belonging to her to enter upon this pursuit to the death. Similarly, was it not England who rejected the proposal to apply the articles of the Geneva Convention to naval war, although it was accepted by all the other Powers? On one occasion only did she decide in favour of humanity and civilisation, and that was when she abolished privateering; but no one can deny that in 1856 privateering was the one thing to be feared for Great Britain, all that the world had to throw into the scale to balance her naval supremacy? It was therefore her own interest which she served when appearing to defend the cause of civilisation. Turning over the leaves of M. Dupuis' book in this way we find all the Powers, and France in particular, yielding themselves up more and more to abstract and generous conceptions, linking them together with maxims of disinterestedness, and confirming and consolidating them into principles, whose only claims to acceptance are the progress of reason, a nicer sense of justice and a wider comprehension of reciprocity. We find England, on the contrary, imbued with a half-unconscious egoism, bent on considering the foreigner as an enemy, rebellious and even impervious to every idea which might help to wrest questions relating to the law of nations from the judgment of private interest and place them before a higher tribunal. England knows and feels her force and desires to retain the liberty of abusing it.

For twenty years these tendencies have been taking ever deeper root, and in proportion with the advance of civilisation in the direction of intellectuality and refinement they have

become more marked and been displayed with a more ingenuous arrogance. This is largely due to the reforms of 1867 and 1884. The electoral right was then conferred on men who had no personal culture; an abrupt extension, or—shall we say?—lowering of the base of power, which led to the reappearance in politics, in an age when science and its methods reigned supreme, of psychological conditions unknown for several centuries. Whereas a class of facts, like hygiene, for example, received a number of solutions which were the fruit of conscientious and prolonged labour in the laboratories, a question like that of Fashoda would be decided definitively by peasants and working men who have remained practically the same for more than four hundred years, and whose stock of requirements has been limited by the imperfection of their sensibilities; they have been brought into but a momentary contact with a civilisation which has glided over them, leaving no trace behind. After the electoral reform they did not realise at once the proper method of using their vote, they neither knew what opinion to have nor how to demonstrate it; their self-confidence dates but from yesterday, and of yesterday also was the reappearance, as in a stock long unproductive, of the concentrated, strong passions, violent prejudices and abbreviated methods of thought, feeling and judgment, which were characteristic of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. A popular conclusion is characterised by the fact that it usually springs from a single idea. An intelligence which is seldom exercised has a difficulty in finding or retaining several ideas which limit and conflict with one another. The one idea therefore develops with concentrated intensity, encountering no contradiction; further, it becomes attached to some image or phrase instead of remaining a simple idea and, for the same reason as I have already given, it tenaciously adheres thereto. Finally, the nation has a special predilection for anything bearing the emblem of strength and victory. Even though it be strength unmingled with pity,

and victory unmingled with justice. In this it resembles a child, and like a child does not detest oratorical bombast, but applauds the *miles gloriosus*. This was the new factor which was introduced into the politics of England twenty years ago, and which, in the guise of ancient Conservative institutions, suddenly took in hand the conduct of affairs; statesmen always have to reckon with it before arriving at any decision, vying with each other in the attempt to satisfy it; for on it, after all is said and done, depends the destiny of a statesman, his lengthened stay in power, and the eclipse of his colleagues by a will which in reality is the will of the people.

Thus, a first fact: the abrupt installation of the democracy as supreme arbiter in politics, and as trustee of the "last word"; a second fact: the invincible determination on the part of all English statesmen to conform their resolutions to the supposed desires of the people and to give way to the mass and to the number, encounter a third fact: British Imperialism, radically affecting it in substance, language, and methods of procedure. Imperialism developed first of all in the ranks of the upper class; it united the roughness inseparable from the manifestations of a strong race with that inexpressible coldness and disdain characteristic of aristocracy alone; a breadth and variety of combination which did not even exclude a certain intelligent generosity. Imperialism was then a doctrine of gentlemen. The democracy, in bringing it down to its level, caused it to lose these elevated attributes; and henceforward it was merely "jingoism," an American word which betrays its popular origin and nature by the vulgarity of its articulation and the discord of its clashing syllables.

This transformation and its causes were rendered apparent by the choice of arguments brought up by either side in the debate on the endowment of Lord Kitchener. The conduct of this general in regard to the Mahdists lost among the sands of the desert has never fully been brought to light. The telegrams received in England emanated in every case from

Englishmen whose interest it was to put a good complexion on the affair. There is, however, reason to believe that the Sirdar gave the order that no prisoners were to be made, and that every Dervish who fell into the hands of his troops was to be massacred without pity. Several newspapers stated that after the taking of Khartoum, instructions given by the absent general allowed the English to violate the sepulchre of the Mahdi; the head was separated from the trunk and delivered to Gordon's nephew, who kept it for some time as a curiosity; moreover, the officers fashioned amulets and trinkets for their watch-chains out of the prodigiously long nails of the prophet. The motion of Mr. John Morley, who, with respect to these scandalous actions, invoked the natural humanity and piety or the English, only obtained 51 votes against 393. "It will be a day of evil omen," added this profound and sagacious observer in conclusion, "when we have two consciences, one for the Mother Country, and the other for the vast territory which the eye cannot encompass." It is interesting to note Mr. Balfour's answer. He made no attempt to take up the line of argument adopted by his opponent. Humanity and piety did not enter into his speech; the justification he brought forward was based on the simple fact that Lord Kitchener had acted according to his conscience, and authorised only what he believed would be to the political advantage of the country which he served. Perhaps, added Mr. Balfour, with a slight show of embarrassment, it may not have been "in very good taste," *i.e.*, good manners had not been observed. This was the only point the orator found it necessary to reprove in these hateful puerilities and revolting profanations. He thus evinced the barely concealed contempt and discomfort of the gentleman saddled with the defence of conduct he knew he must reprove as lightly as possible, otherwise he would find himself out of harmony with the democracy, thenceforward sole judge both of men and things.

On the same day and in the course of the same sitting I

find one simple word used in which the feeling and language of the democracy were equally apparent. It was in connection with the dum-dum bullets, on the subject of which Mr. Dillon brought forward a collection of evidence and demanded certain explanations. Lord George Hamilton replied by the euphemism, which at another time might have seemed exaggerated, that ordinary balls were not sufficient *protection* for the troops who used them. So that this terrible projectile, prepared with the object of dealing the greatest possible number of mortal wounds, was looked upon merely as a protection. The Englishman averted his eyes from the wounded as they were borne away, and those wounds so strangely aggravated which no one could cure; if he did consent to let his eyes rest on them, he would simply say that the Afridis and the Boers have firmer flesh than Europeans and to produce equivalent wounds the use of an extensible bullet is only fair. In this point of view we recognise by indubitable signs the sentiment and opinion of the lower classes.

The upper classes viewed the two nations in conjunction, compared one with the other, and almost immediately came to the conclusion that the English were the superior. The mass of the people went further; they saw nothing but the English troops; the Afridis and the Boers in the background were hidden by dust and smoke; what happened to them they cared not, ignoring and desiring to ignore it. If an apostle of the law of nations, coming from the enemy's camp, had represented to the English the horror of the wounds they had caused, they would have listened without comprehension, as if he had spoken to them of abstract beings. Nothing was real and substantial to them but the Tom and Jack they knew, men who carried the English colours; every method of "protecting" them must be good.

It will be said that the leaders of the two great parties, Tory and Whig, were conscious of the sort of degradation, or, at least, lowering of tone, their policy had undergone. They

experienced the feeling very strongly, but with a certain contemptuous superciliousness, regardless who cared to indicate the personage to whom the language and lesson were applicable. These are the very words used by Lord Salisbury : "I have a strong belief that there is danger of the public opinion of this country undergoing reaction from the Cobdenite doctrines of thirty or forty years ago, believing that it is our duty to take everything we can, to fight everybody, and make quarrels when we can—that seems to me a very dangerous doctrine, not merely because it might incite other nations against us, though that is not a consideration to be neglected. The kind of reputation we are at present enjoying on the continent of Europe is by no means pleasant, by no means advantageous ; but there is a much more serious danger, and that is lest we should overtax our strength. However strong you may be, man or nation, there is a point beyond which your strength will not go, and it is madness and it ends in ruin if you allow yourself to pass beyond it. This rashness has been the ruin of nations as great and powerful as ourselves."

After having quoted these blunt and impulsive words, Sir William Harcourt added : "That is a lesson which it is well for us all to learn. We have been told that we shall derive many lessons from the war—lessons in the art of military and naval preparations. But there is another lesson which far more concerns the safety of this country, and that is not to exasperate by an arrogant and insolent demeanour those whom we desire to be our friends, not to abuse and insult those with whom we have influence, and to carry ourselves with that moderation, prudence, and self-control which truly befits the dignity of an Empire which is conscious of its own greatness and of its own strength."

It is remarkable that it was the chief of the Conservative Party who characterised the policy of the day with so much clearness and correctness, and that the late leader of the Liberal

Party found nothing better to do than to quote and repeat it. They both defined or described the manner of feeling, speaking and acting proper to an aristocratic people, rapidly becoming transformed into a democratic. One pointed out the quarrelsome temper of the nation, its disposition to fight against the whole world, its passion for annexation and appropriation at all times and in all places, and the rashness and want of foresight which prevents it from calculating its forces, and causes it to over-estimate their capacity. The other dwelt in particular upon the necessity of preserving the conventions, of not irritating and embittering friendly nations, nor even inferior races who were disposed to recognise the British protectorship, by offensive words; he recommended to statesmen, doubtless because he saw they lacked such qualities, discretion, propriety, and above all, the self-possession and self-control which have for so long been included among the characteristics of English politicians and diplomatists.

In the face of these criticisms a man was wanted who would concentrate in himself and deliberately embody the faults of a democracy, and insist on their acceptance in the province of power, who at one stroke would sweep away the pet aversions of long-established parties, and knew how to effect their eclipse, so that all the representatives of the nation, with the exception of a feeble minority, would set out on paths along which they would be impelled by the mass of the people and their conductor. Such a man has arisen, viz., Mr. Chamberlain. I have no intention of taking up in detail in this book all the affairs in which he has been concerned; in every case he was the voice of the people, and embodied the passions of the people. Arrogance? Who has shown it more than he, when behind the curtain he directed the negotiations entered into with France on the subject of Fashoda? When he insisted that the claims of England, perfectly legitimate at bottom, should be set forth in humiliating terms, at the risk of war—his secret desire. In each of his successive speeches

we see the same absence of restraint ; it might be said that he inaugurated, as it were, a new diplomatic language, unknown to his predecessors. The bulk of the people trouble themselves little about motives, but much about results, or, to put it in another way, their only motive is the very result at which they aim—an all-powerful England, to speak frankly. This was Mr. Chamberlain's sole aim and object, when, France having given in, he continued the preparations for war, knowing full well that it wanted nothing but these preparations and the sentiments they excited to place peace at the mercy of an incident ; he meant to make war for the sake of war, he wished to attack France, no longer on account of a grievance, for that had evaporated, but in view of certain practical advantages upon which he counted, and at the exact moment when he belived it to be conquered beforehand by the enormous superiority of the English naval forces.

Nothing could be more surprising to, and calculated to baffle, a jurisconsult than the negotiations with the Transvaal; here again the result was the motive—*i.e.*, the maintenance of the English supremacy in South Africa was the explanation given of the policy followed by the Government. Lord Salisbury and his colleagues said the same thing, and all the Press repeated it. The Jameson incident was particularly significant. To-day it seems to every educated man that deliberately formed public opinion must consider the Raid as a flagrant violation of the law of nations, and indubitably an act of outlawry. Four centuries ago the entire Spanish nation accompanied with their prayers and regarded with unmixed admiration the expeditions of a Cortez or Pizarro, and it is certain that those obscurest classes of the English nation, which have recently been brought into prominence, were similarly one at heart with the new adventurer. Mr. Chamberlain realised this, and in all probability was the instigator of the audacious attempt, though when the Jameson case came on he feebly denied it, or, to be more correct, he con-

temptuously admitted the part he had taken in it. "We should have been applauded if it had succeeded," was the substance of what his apologists said. "We do not consent to humble ourselves because it miscarried," these bold words practically expressed the feeling of the whole nation.

In the negotiations with Kruger it is impossible to follow Mr. Chamberlain. At the Bloemfontein conferences the list of conditions on which he had apparently decided to make peace was reported, but when Kruger, after some demur, agreed to them, it was Mr. Chamberlain who found them inadequate, and wanted more. Settlement by arbitration had been accepted at the Hague on the initiative of England, but in vain the two Republics offered to have recourse to it. The suzerainty of England came to an end in 1884; not only was no mention made of it in the last treaty, but in the negotiations it was simply touched upon for the purpose of declaring that it was now null and void. Mr. Chamberlain insisted to the end on suzerainty, because he knew it was repugnant to the Boers and that they would never ratify it. In these and similar instances we see a cynical disregard for conventions. He is like a strong man who refuses to allow himself to be bound and gets his hands free; his conscience is tranquil because the premise he went upon was, that the Dutch nation must not form an obstruction to the English nation, but, on the contrary, must bow to British supremacy.

Therefore Mr. Chamberlain's faults never, at any point, give offence to the democracy. It is characteristic of the people to evince in their demands more impatience and angry bitterness than the upper classes; Mr. Chamberlain is noted for the same traits. It is characteristic of the people to take their desires for realities. Did not Mr. Chamberlain do likewise in the speech at Leicester, when he represented Germany and the United States as allies, and posed as an intimate of the Emperor? It is characteristic of the people to object to their mouthpiece retracting anything he has said; when this ex-

traordinary and universally censured speech was attacked in the House of Commons, Mr. Chamberlain gloried in every word he had uttered and declared that he would not retract a single syllable.[1] It is characteristic of the people in a whole situation to consider only the thing they have most at heart; their sole thought was for the Transvaal, they did not trouble about anything else. Was not this the case with Mr. Chamberlain when he emptied England of her troops and last cannon, when he hastily concluded treaties which had been dragging on for a long time, when he yielded to the claims of Germany over Samoa, and the United States over the Nicaragua Canal, when he passively allowed other nations to take the lead—France at Insalah and Shanghai, Russia in China and Persia? It is characteristic of the people to ignore rebuffs, to half consciously allow itself to be duped, to keep its eyes fixed on the future and the success attending an immense output of force. Is not this what Mr. Chamberlain did when, having carelessly acknowledged that some faults had been committed, he took refuge in the belief that they would shortly be repaired; when, for example, he spoke of the 180,000 men Lord Roberts had at his disposal; when he and his colleagues deemed it the mere pursuance of a law of nature that England should always begin with a defeat, in order the more completely to triumph in the end; when, having simultaneously received news of a victory and a defeat following it, he only published the first in order to give the public at least twenty-four hours of rejoicing? Little or nothing of all this would have been possible twenty-five years ago; the Tories and the Whigs would have directed the policy of the country over the heads of the multitude, and would not

[1] At the time of the Boulanger affair the General's carriage happening to pass through the Place du Carrousel, he abruptly stood up and gazed around on the assembled crowds. He was in full uniform. "I like that," said a man of the people beside me, "it's bravado." Mr. Chamberlain's reply too was mere bravado; and in this we find the reason why the nation is always ready to echo him.

*

have stooped to consult the passions and prejudices of the people; something in them would have resisted the desire to please the multitude and humour the man in the street. The underlying omnipotence of the democracy has brought about the change in their method of procedure; powerless to stop themselves, they hurry down the slope towards which the reckless and cynical personality of a Chamberlain has led them. He is like a comet which, coming within the radius of a brilliant and fixed constellation, has involved it in a headlong flight.

Conclusion.

England, at the beginning of the twentieth century, is very different from what it was a hundred years ago. In fact it is another country altogether. Material civilisation has made immense progress between the two dates. In 1800, only a coach service connected the larger towns; now the smallest localities have their railway lines. In 1800, postage was costly, and letters few and far between; now the penny and halfpenny post daily conveys to all parts of England millions of letters, despatches, and packets, the number of which increases annually. The telegraph places under the eye of the reader the thought which an hour before flashed into a mind thousands of leagues off; the telephone adds intonation and accent. In 1800, no one would have believed it possible that distances could thus be effaced and the intercourse of minds established, as one might say, from mouth to ear, between any place whatsoever in the world and its antipodes. Travelling has become very general, on account of its cheapness. The newspaper press, which by reason of its high price, increased by the Stamp Duty, used to be confined to the middle classes, has penetrated through the medium of the halfpenny paper into every stratum of the population, even the most miserable; and the man who has only threepence to spend every morning gives a penny for a paper: he thus becomes acquainted with

what happened in London the day before, and what happened two days before in any part of the world. England has become more and more comparable to a vast city—London, for example, with Newcastle and Manchester as its suburbs; it now takes less time for visits and communications between these towns than it did a century ago between the West End and the East End. Men especially have become more like one another. A common type has been formed, defined, and determined by the Press, towards which every individual is attracted and by which he is fashioned. This, as we might call it, urban nature of the relations between the inhabitants of a country 89,000 square miles in extent is certainly the most remarkable that is revealed to us by observation.

The basis of society has undergone a change similar to that of its exterior conditions. How many differences have arisen in this interval of a hundred years? From the eighteenth century we received an aristocracy: the twentieth century gives us a democracy. In 1800, the imposing figure of the justice of the peace still dominated rural life, now he is shorn of all administrative authority: in the parish, the district, and the county, elected Boards fill his place. In 1800, an almost incredible distribution of the franchise restricted the suffrage to a few privileged persons, now four million electors are crowded within the precincts of the "legal country." In 1800, the working men had not one single material right recognised by the common law and the statutes: now they are on a level with the other classes, and as regards them and their masters the *rôles* have been reversed to their advantage. Supremacy, after escaping from the oligarchy, remained but for a moment in the hands of the middle classes: henceforward it belongs to the greatest number.

It is not only by this change in the disposition of rights, influence, and power that the new century is distinguished from the one which preceded it, but also by the ends to which it intends to apply its recently acquired forces and by the

sovereign good which the nation now regards as its ideal. Gladstone absolutely deceived himself when, in 1867, by the Reform Bill, the articles of which, in spite of the Conservatives, he drew up in the most approved Liberal fashion, and in 1884, in the statute to which he gave his name, he called upon the working men of the towns and the labourers of the fields to take their place once and for all in the "legal country." He believed he was simply making a political reform: unconsciously he brought about a social revolution; he flattered himself he was only altering the balance of parliamentary equilibrium: he renewed the spirit by which the legislature and the Government henceforward were swayed; he imagined that the new electors would regulate all their proceedings by their class interests: he formed no idea of the immense recoil which would be caused in the political world by this sort of invasion of savages, who were more sensible of impressions than ideas, of colour than form, and accustomed to think according to instincts which could with difficulty be reconciled to the logic of the classes hitherto in possession of power. These lower classes, abruptly brought into prominence, and called upon to take their share in their country's work, were slow, awkward, and indifferent to everything save their daily needs. In England, more than in any other country, they had formed a compact mass, impervious to the manner of feeling and reasoning of the elect. The mass became friable and disaggregated. By means of education and the newspapers each molecule of the mass was brought into contact with new ideas. It might have been thought that the Press would take upon itself the task of enlightening and forming public opinion. It has done nothing of the kind. It aims not at instructing and improving the individual, but at becoming the mouthpiece of the thoughts, good or evil, which have some influence over him. In obedience to its own interests it says to each one what he will be pleased to hear. Therefore, instead of ridding man of his errors, it

rather tends to flatter, strengthen, and furnish him with excuses for them. The numerous and rapid vehicles of opinion, which should be admirable mediums for the diffusion of knowledge, are employed rather in propagating the blindest, most selfish, and unscrupulous of passions, viz., the fever for pre-eminence, contempt for justice, inclination to ignore traditional conventions and to judge of the strength of a country by the violence of its language, determination never to be put in the wrong, and abbreviated and simplified logic, incapable of comprehending the rich diversity of a complex reality. The Press has become the auxiliary of barbarity. Propagated by the newspapers, which should correct and reform them, these tendencies have become by degrees the characteristic traits of the new democracy.

Our object in this volume has not been to cast the horoscope of the future, nor have we endeavoured, as will be recognised, to bring to light the causes already comparatively deep and remote which have, in a hundred years, completely transformed the State, the nation, and the country. Our aim has been a different one: we have sought further back than the moving picture of the world for the first causes, the governing causes, which are immutable; we have followed them in their effects, which likewise escape the variations of external circumstances. These effects present this peculiarity, that they may be followed and recognised in the nation, transformed in all outward seeming, who have just begun as we might say a new history. What we have endeavoured to grasp is the fundamental basis of the English character, that part of it which, for all time, and through each change of government—democracy, oligarchy, monarchy, republic, free trade or protective rights—will remain the same. Indeed, in spite of the enormous differences of character that it presents from one century to another, the English people has remained and will remain in a high degree individualised, incapable of, and in-

different to sympathy, very proud even in the humility of an intense devotion, contemptuous of other nations and unfitted to mix with them, incapable of comprehending, even from a distance, the solidarity of the civilised world, inclined to divide questions into sections, considering them bit by bit, with no thought of combining them in the harmony of a vast synthesis, employing logic rather in framing excuses than in discovering new horizons, more inclined to follow the fluctuations of a distinguished statesman than to pull him up by a strict adherence to principles, free from all trace of a revolutionary spirit and yet abounding in original personalities—— I must stop. I have said enough in the preceeding pages to enable those desirous to grasp, under the changing mask, the permanent features of which the physiognomy of the Englishman is composed. These features are the effect of the causes which from remotest centuries have affected the play, always interesting, of its history, political, administrative, economical and social, and which, moreover, to a large extent gives the movement and even the direction of this history.

It is to these causes that, in the future, as in the past, the rich originality of England will be due.

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